SHADES OF A SHAIVITE

Five Faced Svacchand Bhairava

Sh. Vish Nath Jotshi (Bhat)

PUBLISHER

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श्री स्वामी राम जी

॥ॐ श्री गणेशाय नमः॥

आनन्दं आनन्दकरं प्रसन्नं ज्ञानस्वरूपं निजबोधयुक्तम्।
योगीन्द्रमीढ्यं भवरोगवैद्यं श्री सद्गुरुं नित्यमहं नमामि॥

श्रीमद् परंब्रह्म गुरुं भजामि
श्रीमद् परंब्रह्म गुरुं वदामि
श्रीमद् परंब्रह्म गुरुं श्रयामि।

अर्थः- मैं उस श्रेष्ठ गुरुदेव, जो परंब्रह्म के समान हैं, शिव स्वरूप हैं, को नित्य नमन करता हूँ। विनती करता हूँ । उन्हीं का आश्रय लेता हूँ तथा जो अपार सुखों का सुख (समावेशात्मक सुख) देते हैं। जो ज्ञान स्वरूप हैं, आत्म बोध से युक्त हैं, श्रेष्ठ योगियों द्वारा पूजे जाते हैं, सांसारिक रोगों (दुखों) के वैद्य हैं अर्थात् परमशिव से मिलाने की व्यवस्था का उपाय करते हैं, मार्ग दिखाते हैं।

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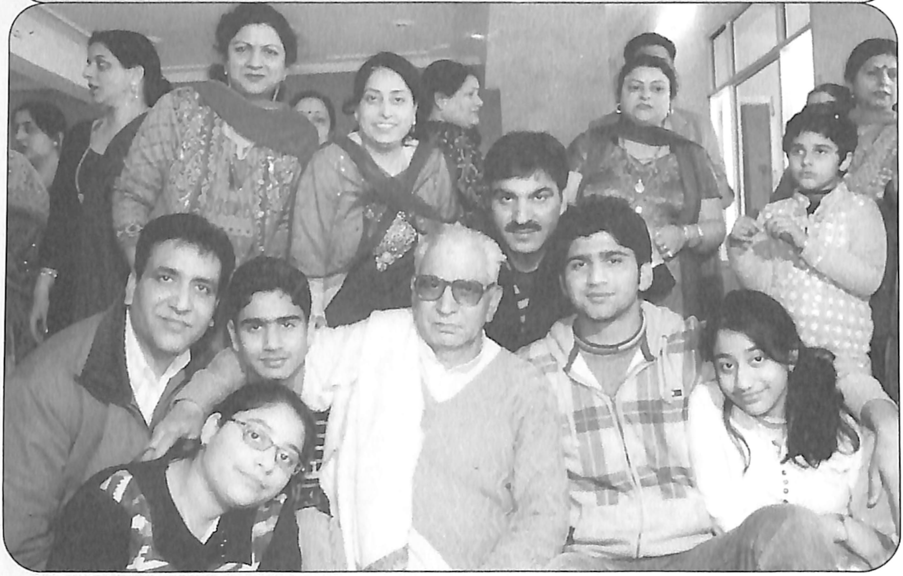

CONTENTS

1.	Introduction	01
2.	Vish Nath Jotshi (Bhat) - The Aachaarya who taught all!	08
3.	The Science of Humanism	15
4.	Vish Nath Jotshi (Bhat) - A Shavite Scholar	18
5.	Vish Nath Jotshi - Passionate teacher, keen traditionalist	21
6.	My Guru (Shri Vish Nath Jotshi [Bhat])	28
7.	Gurudev : The Supreme Brahman	31
8.	"Om Sh. Shivaya Gurvey Namah"	35
9.	Shri Vish Nath Jotshi (Bhat) - A Humble Tribute	37
10.	Tributes	39
11.	मनसा स्मरामि	46
12.	मेरे गुरुों श्री विश्वनाथ ज्योतिषी	51
13.	गुरु बिन गति नाहि	53
14.	मेरे दादू	55
15.	Photo Gallery	57
16.	अपने कलम से	59
16.	Press Gallery	60

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INTRODUCTION

Kashmir Shaivism---An Appraisal

The basic premise of the spiritual quest of Kashmir Shaivism follows a revolutionary path to self realization which is the basic pursuit of Indians since times ancient. The exegesis of Kashmir Shaivite scriptures reveals wonderful plot of oneness of the world with its creator- Parma-Shiva. Because of His free will, Param Shiva manifests Himself into the world. And as a result of His free will He again wraps up this manifestation unto Himself. His sovereignty or Swatantrya makes this happen through His power-Shakti or Vimarsha. Thus Paramshiva who in essence is Prakasha permeates the entire animate or inanimate world making a wonderful oneness with His manifestation. He is both the Being and the Becoming, thereby creating and dissolving the world unto Him. This makes Kashmir Shaivism a remarkable philosophical thought, perhaps the pinnacle of man's spiritual longing. To know his real meaning as well as the cause of the world has been man's pursuit which is as old as his inquisitiveness about things around him. His place in the universe has occupied his thoughts. Whenever things were more congenial this inquiry became more intense in scope and profound in quality.

India has the great fortune of having nursed and nurtured in depth the analysis about the man, his place in the universe, his cause of being and above all the quest to know the fundamental unity underlying all things whether animate or otherwise. It is this intense and deep urge to know about existence and fundamental basis of existence that it attained the exalted status of Vishva Guru-The World Teacher. The uniqueness of India's inquiry into mysticism, spirituality, metaphysics and philosophy has touched a vast swathe which is not only baffling but mindboggling too.

From the Vedas and Tantras which together comprise the most ancient spiritual literature in India, there has been sometimes a happy blending of ideas despite of course there being different interpretations regarding the primeval reality underlining the universe. As a result broadly six traditional schools of philosophy so

commonly called Shat Darshana occupy a major portion of India's intellectual effusion regarding philosophical expositions which took the form of elaborate schools of thought. Some of these philosophical schools are totally materialistic like the Charvaks who espouse a total material concept while negating the value of a presiding deity or God. For them the need to have a God or creator is not an essentiality as creation and destruction are automatic processes in nature in which one follows the other. At the other scale is the acme of India's philosophical flowering in the form of Kashmir Shaiva philosophy and also Vedanta Darsana so aptly propounded by the Great Shankra who arguably is considered as one of the top most thinker philosophers of all times. The Vedantic declaration Aham Bhramasi is a reiteration of the fundamental premise of Hindus that man himself is God incarnate provided he realizes his real self.

A curious development in India's spiritual cum philosophical inquiry is the stress on absolute monism and not monotheism. It is a vital difference that makes India's spiritual inquiry not only more profound, logical and universal but cogently more superior. Monotheism propounded in Christianity and Islam or Judaism, the three Semitic religions means belief in an all powerful God who tolerates nobody other than himself. He cannot have other partner in his scheme. In other words what follows after him is not of the same material as he is Himself. This argument of belief in one God has been unjustly used by the Semitic religions in their false propaganda that Hindu religion is polytheist in nature, having crores of so called Devi- Devtas. This erroneous and brazen misunderstanding of Hinduism has resulted into untold miseries and pain on the Hindu people inflicted by Islamic and Christian mercenaries who thought and still think Hindus to be pagan believers who believe in countless gods and goddesses. Unfortunately, the vast masses of Hindus too believe this way because since Islamic incursions in the country the independence of Indian mind faded a great deal. The ferment of inquiry, debate and tolerance which were the hall mark of our greatness greyed yet the grit of Hindus carried on with the result they are still able to hold their own in the present times as well.

In this introduction on a Shaiva teacher's souvenir being released on his first death anniversary I dwell upon the concepts of monism and monotheism because Hindus by and large have been derided without any substantive reason other than to make them feel lowly and thus worthy to be reformed and converted at the hands of intolerant Islamic and Christian missionaries. Hindu religion needless to say primarily believes in one single God called Parmeshwar or in Vedanta parlance Param Bhramah. Upnishids, first time heralded the first genuine probing of man's honest inquiry into the essentiality of oneness of universe thus stressed upon a fundamental power which is the root cause of the whole creation and its destruction. But this universal power is far superior and all pervading to the monotheism of Islam, Christianity or Judaism. The reason why absolute monism like the philosophies of Vedanta and Kashmir Shaivism are undoubtedly on a far higher pedestal among spiritual discourses and philosophies of the world.

Interestingly there has been a great debate going on the nature why intolerance among Islam or other religions has been brazen is also perhaps due to the fact that the monotheism enforces the will of a non compromising God seeping among its followers thus forcing them to uproot and deny any breathing space to other view points and philosophies. This has been more intense in the case of Islam which has not tolerated the essential unity of man and God. On the other hand Hindu mind while analyzing the essential nature off God proclaims a basic unity between the world and God. The whole universe is nothing but a manifestation of God and is not in any way neither dissimilar to Him nor different from Him. This view enforces the unification of God and universe thus brings in an innate coherence in the cosmic existence. On the other hand while as monotheistic religions preach and thump their chests about being believers of one God, they in effect follow a dualistic pattern where God and the world are different to each other. In their scheme there is no scope for merger with God because he is different and superior to his creation. Vedanta dwells upon essentiality of oneness of God and his creation, it at the same time delineates upon the Maya Tattva responsible for the ignorance of man about his true cosmic nature

and terms the world as illusion created by Maya. The philosophy develop in the happy valley of Kashmir goes many steps further. It does not term the world as illusion but as real as God himself. The Maya Tattva is the power of Shiva to hide his vastness into a limited vision. Kashmir Shiva philosophy makes a welcome departure from the practices like renunciation of the world or taking a flight to mountains or taking Sanyasa and emphasises upon the practitioner and the aspirant to be a house holder-the Grahistya, who can realise his own self while performing the house hold duties. In other words Kashmir Shaivism is not totally removed from the normal human activity and in effect follows the Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha scheme to self realisation. Thus, this pristine philosophy is not removed from life but is a vibrant part of the people who can attain oneness with God while doing all worldly activities. The great Kashmiri scholars were thus not far removed from the people but preached and practiced in their midst. A lot has been said about the origin of Kashmir Shaivism. But I must here hurry to add that having the prefix of word Kashmir, it should not be implied for a moment that Kashmir Shaivism is far removed from the historically continuous philosophical thread of the entire Indian sub-continent. Only, it is the best flowering of India's continuous thought process whose churning had started in this huge geographical region thousands of years ago. A sinister campaign to make look Kashmir Shaivism something far away and removed from the great Indian thought process is being carried away by many who want to portray Kashmir as not the part of India whether spiritually or culturally. This dubious posturing needs to be analysed in detail especially when all out efforts are being made to complete Jihadi and separatist footprint in Kashmir. As we are not in a position to settle a fixed date of its origin because it is not possible in first place, hence a futile attempt, the reason being that this absolute monism is the result of fusion of so many thought streams about which we cannot ascribe a fixed date. There are elements of Vedanta, Tantra and Buddhist logical doctrines which have enriched this philosophy and made it so vibrant and holistic.

One current belief is that Saamb the son of Lord Krishna was initiated

into this distinctive philosophy by sage Durvasa. It is a period that goes back to three thousand years before BC. It is said that the composition of Saamb called Saamb Panchishika is actually based on the subtler principles of this philosophy. This is the reason, why this fifty verse composition till date forms an important part of Kashmiri Shaivite literature. Then on follows the same historical lineage of Risi Durvasa teaching this philosophy to many teachers who in a continuous line lead us upto a Siddha (Self realized soul) called Trymbknatha or Triyambikaditya. Four teachers appear in his line Vasugupta, Somanand, Erikanath and Sumithnath. They form four different schools of Kashmir Shaiva monism namely Spand School, Pratibhijna School, Krama School and Kaula School. Vasugupta who is said to have flourished between seventh and eighth century BC in a dream is asked by Lord Shiva to visit a place in a forest in present.

Dachigaam wild life sanctuary near Harwan adjacent to Srinagar and touch a rock which will turn upside down and the all important Shiv-Sutras will be found inscribed on it. Vasugupta does as directed in the dream and comes out with the Shiv Sutras. These Sutras (aphorisms) form one of the important cornerstones of this philosophy. Vasugupta is followed by Bhatta Kallata who in his monumental work Spand Karika dwells upon the effusion of spontaneous desire in the being of Paramshiva to manifest as the world and its various elements. This wave of desire in him to manifest is called Spanda or vibration. Somananda and his disciples perfected and add upon the Pratibhijna School called the Doctrine of Recognition which finally sees full culmination through the exquisite contribution of the Great Abhinavguta in the latter half of eleventh century. Somananda is followed by Utpaldeva, Lakshmangupta, Narsimgupta, Abhinav Gupta, Kshemraja and Yograja who make signal contribution to the Pratibihijna School making it more profound in scope and swathe. Very little is known about the two other Schools of Krama and Kaula but undoubtedly some of their elements must have survived till recently in the available compendium of Kashmir Shaiva Darshana. From fourteenth century Kashmir witnessed a continuous holocaust like situation when Islamic zealots virtually stamped out all available vestiges of great Hindu civilization from the valley. History is witness

to this whole scale plunder, loot, arson and mayhem, the like of which has few parallels in the annals of the world history. Grand monuments of Martand, Awantipur etc now in stark ruins stand witness to the systematic defacement of majestic culture of Kashmir. Yet it goes to the credit of the Kashmiri Hindu that despite facing continuous persecution, he somehow clung to his culture, traditions and learning which today is still extant in the shape of Shaiva philosophy. We must not forget the immense contributions of the Devi Lalleshwari who in her Vakhs kept the seed of this philosophy viable in her people.

It is bleak history from fourteen century to 1819 AC during which Hindus suffered a continuous persecution. But he did not lose his historical mind and cultural superiority. He continued to cling and add to his heritage. Otherwise how come four Rajatarangnies followed Kalhana's in regular succession. Similarly Kashmir Shaiv Darshana was taught secretly till we arrive at the times of Swami Sahib Kaul, and Sivaopadhaya. Soon after the arrival of Sikhs in 1819 AC, Hindus breathed a sigh of relief. Around this period, a Siddha Swami Man Kak Monga was perfecting himself to transmit this time less philosophy to his disciple Swami Ram Jee who was to arrive some time later. Born in 1850 Swami Ram jee, a born Siddha and ardent Sadhak (practioner) took upon himself the task of teaching Shaiva doctrines to his disciples- Swami Mahtab Kak, Swami Vidhayadhar and Swami Gobind Kaul. From the direct lineage of Swami Mahtab Kak appeared the redoubtable Swami Lakshman Joo who popularised this philosophy among a host of scholars and more importantly among western students, who have in turn have brought this price less philosophy in the international limelight. Here from another branch of Guru Shiya Papampara come to us from Swami Vidyadhar jee. A Tapasvi and radiant with verve to propagate and popularise the Shiva doctrines, he had visited various place in Kashmir Himalayas. He remained at the famous Sri Amarnath Cave where he intensely meditated for months. He was an accomplished Sanskrit scholar and a great devotee of Lord Shiva. His energy and zeal was legendary. He taught many disciples who in turn started teaching Shaiva philosophy at Swami Vidyadhar Ashram at

Karannagar, Srinagar. This Ashram named after Swami Vidyadhar Jee was established in 1944 AC. Here Dr Srikant Raina held regular classes which were attended without fail by Shri Vish Nath Bhat (Jyotshi) who was born on 17th July 1937 at Bijhebehara, Anantnag and passed away recently on 26th February 2013 after a brief illness. Thus here an attempt has made to survey some elements of Kashmir Shaivism in a historical perspective. This commemorative number or a souvenir on Pandit Vish Nath Bhat Jyotshi titled Shades of a Shaivite, published by Swami Vidyadhar Swami Mahadev Ashram Paloura; Jammu is a sacred venture to honour its most visible propagator and teacher in recent times. Shades of a Shaivite gives us a glimpse of the grit of a man not steeped in the traditional way yet nursed an intense passion to learn Shaiva treatises. What is eminently commendable is the way he took all pains to transmit them to the next generation. He wrote five small books which add to the means of understanding of this philosophy especially for the beginners. Word by word translation of Shiva Mahimnastrotam, Trik Darshan Aek Sanshipt Avlokan, Divine Touch, Paath Sangreh and Strota Sangreh written by him are good books, handy, brief and easy to understand. This makes his effort praiseworthy and worth emulation especially when Kashmiri Pandits have been forced out of the valley facing all attendant risks that come with a long exile. Shades of a Shaivite contain articles on him by his students, friends and the impressions about him by his family members. Relevant photographs and his hand writing specimens add to its value.

The legacy of Kashmir Shaivism is bound to endure because it does not differentiate between a Hindu, a Muslim or a Christian. It under lays the unity of man and God thus is reflective of assimilation and not segregation. Words like Kafirs, pagans, or infidels do not fit in its universal appeal. Hence its philosophy will endure till man rejoices in the ways of free thought and oneness of existence. Kashmir Shaiva philosophy is undoubtedly representative of the genius of the Indian mind which found full flowering at the hands of Kashmiri scholars in Sharda -Desha called Kashmir.

Pradeep Kaul (Khudballi)

VESHNATH BHAT – THE AACHAARYA WHO TAUGHT ALL!

Dr. R. L. BHAT

Achaaryaji (as we used to call the late Shrii Veshnath Bhat, Jyotishi) is a difficult man to write about. He was a Shaiva achaarya in the sense that he was one of the last in the tradition of the Shaiva teachers in Kashmir when he died last year, yet he was so unassuming that he made each one of his taught feel that they knew more about the pristine philosophy of Kashmir than he did. He did not hold a regular seat in the Shaiva ashrams, yet he was the spirit moving the two well known Shaiva Aashram at Jammu, Swami Raam Trikha Aashram and Swami Vidyaadhar Aashram as well as being a respected person at the Aashram of Iishvarsvaruup Swamii Lakshamji. He was not a scholar in the pedagogic sense of the word, yet he brought a positive acquaintance of the lore of the Kashmir Shaivism to a large number of people, in the line of his own teacher, Swamii Vidyaadharji. He was, what we today may call, the aam aadmii Shaiva achaarya.

Every time one thinks of aachaaryaji, the image that arises in the mind is him sitting in Bhairav mudraa among his pupils, mute and upright, eyes open looking through everything yet visibly registering nothing. This, of course, was not his usual mode. In fact, he was a joyous being, ever ready to smile at a good word as at a good joke. He was accessible, responsive and highly involved with each one of the people sitting before him. He taught the most esoteric bits and discussed the subtle points with a jocund twinkle in his eye. Often, he punctuated the discussion with couplets from Shivastrotaavali recited to the ever oozing delight of his the people partaking of his lessons and learning. Each lesson was filled with the anecdotes of the Shaiva aachaaryas he had learned from. Each lesson was a free flowing lore. It brought alive the Shaiva tradition of teaching. His assuming the Bhairava mudraa was a demonstration of how a Shaiva should always be – in with everything yet detached from all, suffused with the inner light that shone all over.

He did certainly try to illumine those who cared to attend his classes. In fact, he was so freewheeling here, that he took in anybody and

everybody, male and female, the retired elders as well as the young ones. The only thing that mattered was an urge, a bent to imbibe the hoary lore. He gave unto all without inhibition, save one of the interest. You had to be genuinely interested to evoke his interest in you. Then, he gave of himself without any reservation. Where he perceived that the lack of that genuineness, he grew disenchanted. This was a test of paatritava in his own way. Though he did not refuse any person, it told of the basic tenet viz. the urge to learn. Shaivism is a philosophy of initiation, he often said, it is a quest within and must be cultivated to become meaningful. You may read all the books, absorb all the philosophies, but unless there is a seeking heart little is achieved.

Association with him demonstrated that spiritual communion was after all an enterprise in earthliness and simplicity. When the earthly aachaarya set about expounding the subtleties of Shaivism, it was an unfolding of the ultimate. Shaivism is an easy path, he'd say, because all it needs is will, ichhaa. You will and you attain. With ichhaa you can easily break the paashaas, break through the kanchukaas and realize your innate Shivahood. Just banish the vikalpas, get through phantoms of thought constructs and you reach the end, the spirit ultimate. Now what are vikalpaas? , he'd ask and explain. You hear a far away sound. It could be a drum being beaten, an elephant rutting or people quarrelling. The faraway noise evokes many explanations. As sound comes a little nearer you may cancel some assumptions entertain others or even form new ones. These are all ideations on an unknown thing. We form ideations about the ultimate depending upon the nearness of the sound, rather our own proximity to the truth. This guesswork continues till the sound becomes clearer. These are all vikalpaas, shuffling in the mindscape so long as you do not arrive at the definite identification.

Alternatively, reverse the progression of shabd and you would realize the primeval indeterminate naad passing through the distraction of differentiation and oneness and becoming manifest. The transition of paraa to pashyanti to madhyama and finally vaikhurii are the virtual stages of differentiation of the sound or naada. In the

unformed or undifferentiable sound, there are no identifications with this word or that. Once the differentiation comes, the unformed sound has been given distinct form and life, a virtual bringing about of the diverse creation from a formless whole, the Oneness. Reaching back to the unformed source, by dropping out the diverse word-forms and sounds, is realizing the Oneness in the diversity, the progression from the many to the One. This is shaktipaat of the highest order, aachaaryaji would say. Bringing home the esoteric mysteries to even kumaara budhies as Kheemraaja promises in the very beginning of Pratibigyaahridayam, he would tell that this chakra of Oneness passing through its many forms and finally back to the One is the core of Shaivist thought. Here the paradigm of Oneness , ahantaa as the absolute rejection of many different forms, seen as thisness, idantaa, is easily understood. That is how Shaivism gets called the easy way, Aachaaryaji would conclude with the glee of having made a subtle conception so easy to handle, even for a novice in the lore.

At the same time, he would caution against seeing realization as open only to the operation of will the ichhaa shakti. Realisation can come as easily through gyaana, the power or path of knowledge, he'd add, effortlessly opening the way to the second of the paths. Quoting the scriptures, he would explain that with gyaana the operation of tat-tvas is comprehended in a comprehensive manner. One is able to see through the cloaks of differentiation and realize that shrishttii , the creation is but a manifestation of One. It is mere naama-ruupa or niila-piita, the technical terms used in the shaiva lore for the outer and inner differentiations leading to the confusion of many. Ahantaa when seen as idantaa either within or outside is being asansaarii; realizing the innate truth of the expansive creation takes the pashuu to the state of purusha the primal being. With gyaana the realization brings enlightenment in an easy understandable way. No kriya, no observances, no performances of ordained practices is prescribed for those who take the ichhaa and gyaana maargaas to realization of the ultimate, Aachaayaji would inform with a finality.

At the same time, he would tell that there were few practitioners of these paths who did not love to perform the practices of purification for their own sake. One here has to be wary of the word ritual ordinarily used for the religious practices. While ritual does mean "The prescribed procedure for conducting religious ceremonies or any customary observance or practice" the word is more often than not taken in the sense of "stereotyped behavior" implying a thoughtless repetition of the customary practices. Though religious ceremonies are sometimes performed routinely without involvement, it does not imply that it always is so, or that it is often so. Ordinarily, the devotees are ardently involved in the practice and perform the worship with total involvement of body and soul. That is saadhanaa, which as aachaaryaji used to remind, the practitioners of the ichhaa and gyaana maarga lovingly did though it was not prescribed for them. This later fact that no practices are prescribed for the followers of the paths of ichhaa and gyaana has misled many, especially the Muslims, to assume that Kashmir Shaivism rejected the observances and practices, so essential in the paradigm of Indian dharma. This is not so. Worship, vidhii and puujaa with full complement of sham-dam-praanaayaam as ordained by different vidhi-padatiisare observed by shaivas who take the next path, viz. the kriyaa maarga, to realization. In fact, most of the people take to the path of kriyaa. It is the path of constant and consistent application and observances.

Imbued with devotion, suffused with Bakti, the people of kriyaa follow the practices ordained till they receive shaktipaat, the divine grant of realization of the ultimate. Aachaayaji used to emphasise that all is shaktipaat, the anugraha of Shakti, coming to whosoever She chooses of her own volition. 'It is a grant from the divine and you can do nothing about it, save be ready to receive when it comes.' he would add in a mysteriously, 'think of a tiny ant at the rim of bowl of water in the middle of which lies a piece of barfii. The ant wants to get there, but there is no way save for somebody to lift it from the rim and put it upon the barfii piece. Doing so for the ant is shaktipaat.' The ant circling the sweet over the rim is the bakt, the devotee of ardent practices. Aachaaryaji used to emphasis the core belief that

saadanaa was an essential element for full realization, even saying that one bereft of saadanaa could not attain much in spiritual elevation. This emphasis has given rise to a misconception among the Kashmiris that Muslim saints practicing hard austerities were akin to the Shaiva practitioners of saadanaa.

Many a pacifist looking for meeting points between the Muslim and non-Muslims milieus, especially in Kashmir, have put their stock in these parallel misconceptions. Do-gooders out to found a brotherhood of sorts between the two communities, they actually tend to dismiss the concrete differences as mere variations of the path leading to the same goal. But the goal is not the same and that makes for a sea of difference there. Yet the fact is rarely appreciated, leading to a confounding of the basics. Joonaraaja, the primary historian of the most crucial phase of Kashmir history begins this calling Shahmiira "the person who called Iishvra Allah". Apparently, the Hindu chieftains and people also believed that the only difference there was of different names for divine. They did not see propping up Shahmiir, the new strongman on the block, meant more than a person of another aachaara, like, say a Buddhist or a Vaishnava, being there. Shahmiira only assumed the name Shamsudiina and let the other misconceptions expediently stay. Once the expediency was over, even wearing the same dress was an anathema: Sayyid Alii Hamdaanii admonished Shahmiir's grandson Kudadiina, or Kutubudiin as the Persian chroniclers style him, for tying his garment on the same side as the non-Muslims of Kashmir and ordered the practice changed. Sayyid Alii, the first Persian historian of Kashmir, tells that Kutubudiin happily obeyed. Allah, the variant names for the same thing as Iishavara, turned out an altogether different thing demanding an opposing practice.

Kashmir Shaivism, as Aachaaryaji often pointed out, is an advaita creed. The pinnacle of godly ideation in Semitic religions is uniting many-gods into a single Lord – Jehovah, God, Allah of Jews, Christians and Muslims, respectively. This is what the Indian tradition called duvaita or dualism. This is how the earliest of Indian darshanas, conceived the God-head – a single, supreme, powerful

deity, one God, apart from the grosser creation, lording everything over. This is monotheism. As Swamii Vivekananda tells it, the Indian spiritual enquiries began with monotheism. This was how divinity was kenned at the earliest time. It, however, is a philosophical contradiction; separating the Lord from the gross world, ends up making the gross universe as a parallel entity. This beomes logically co-equal with the monotheistic God, and thus leaves the lord less supreme, less eternal. To be the sole being, the Lord has to have no equal, and here is creation standing as an independent thing.

Saying that the grosser world was produced on order in half-a-dozen days or instantly uttering kun (be thou) does not help, unless the world or creation is seen as being one with the Lord, derived of the God matter itself. Insisting that a stone is not of God-matter, implies that a stone is made up of something which did not come from the Lord. It is saying that the stone existed a priori or came into being simultaneously with the Lord. When of this dualist ideation of the darshanas reached this logical conundrum, it led to the advaita, or monism. Advaita or Non-dualism sees the whole universe as an emanation of one Lord, for it can't be otherwise. Few later Muslim philosophers, like Ibn Arbii, after getting acquainted with this monist flowering, saw the logic and postulated that all was Allah or God. That is the hama oo ast – all is He – as opposed to the earlier postulate that all came from Allah or God, i.e. the contradictory hama az oo ast – all is from Him. However, hama-oo-ast believers where so hemmed in by their circumstances that they wrapped their clarity in many confusing covers.

Aachaaryaji, teaching Ksheemaraaja, used to hold eloquent on the point that Kashmir Shaivism had further refined Shankaraacharya's advaita by introducing the concept of svaatantriya, to replace avidya. Shrishttii or the creation comes to be by the will or Svaatantriya implies that the Lord or rather the transcendence called parma shiva in Kashmir Shaivism and Brahman in Vedanta. Through successive stages, the Oneness or ahanta, gets differentiated into this-ness or idanta, till it gives rise to prithvii, the gross form. These stages or forms are termed tat-tvas, each one representing what is called

pramaataa or transformant, the observed thing or being. Reversing this succession of transformants ends up at the transcendence, Parma Shiva. Conventionally the former is called descent and the later ascent, or evolution and involution. As aacharyaji never failed to insist, in Kashmir Shaivism, the connotations implicit in the terms ascent and descent are not accepted, as the whole is seen an unfolding and folding up of sorts.

The conception, as explained in the texts incorporates a host of ideations which become clear only with the aid of a perceptive teacher. Veshnathji was one such personage, who added the simplicity of his approach to make the things truly easy. This he did by teaching the original texts, word by word in English, Urdu and Kashmiri. That was how Svaamii Raam had re-opened the mystique of Kashmir Shaivism in his Trika aashram in the 19thcentury after the Dogra rule had ensured that religious freedom would no longer be curbed. He brought out, the noble thoughts from the texts to fore by encouraging the consistent study. This tradition continued through his disciples flowering in the aashrams of Swaamii Vidyadharji and Swami Lakshamanji. The contribution of Ishavarasvaruup in this regard is simply stupendous. The explosive appreciation of interest in the Shaiva advaita, or Kashmir Shaivism, today is because of the efforts of this great exponent. Though not so super fluent, Dr. Srikantth kept up the tradition at Svaamii Vidyaadhar Aashram at Karannagar in Srinagar. Late Shrii Veshnathji was his pupil who kept this tradition of teaching from the original scriptures alive at Svaamii Vidyaadhar and Svaami Raam Aashrams at Patoli and Trilookpuur, in Jammu after the Exile. Freely generous, accommodating and earthly he tried to light as many souls as he could, hoping that this would absolve him of the debt he owed his own teacher. His students vouch that he repaid it well.

THE SCIENCE OF HUMANISM

Dr. Jai Kishan Sharma

The most significant contribution of Kashmirian scholars to Indian Philosophical thought is Trika Darshan also known as Kashmir Shaivism. The appellative "Kashmir Shaivism" was first used by Shri Jagdish Chander Chatterjee in his book titeld "Kashmir Saivism".

The literature of Trika consists of three different classes of work namely The Agam Shastra, The Spanda Shastra and The Prtyabhijna Shastra. The Agam literature is ascribed to divine authorship or Shiva's own composition in the form of conversation between Shiva and Shakti. Spanda means "vibration". According to Spanda Shastra the whole universe in all its states and aspects is nothing but a system of "Vibratory Movement". As such this Shastra is the science of the universe looked upon as a system of vibration. The central tenet of the system is "everything is Spanda" i.e. nothing exists without movement. The ultimate movement takes place inside the supreme consciousness. The world manifestation arises out a free and spontaneous creative activity, or Spanda, in the Absolute.

Prtyabhijna means "Recognition" i.e. man's realization of himself as he really is. In other words this is the Recognition of Shiva or union with Shiva. On account of its triadic ontology this philosophy has been given the name of Trika Darshan. Some of the main principles of this philosophy are as under:

Although the word Trika indicates three but everything is found in a state of oneness. It accepts Paramshiva the only one reality which consists of Absolute and pure consciousness. Its analysis of man and the universe is absolutely monistic. Svatantrya is the most specific characteristic of the Ultimate Reality i.e. Paramshiva. According to Trika Darshan the entire cosmic manifestation is constituted by the trinity of Shiva, Shakti and Nara. Shiva is the absolute. Nara is the assumed finite condition of the Absolute. Shakti is an intermediary between Shiva and Nara. Shakti is the innate power of Shiva. By virtue of Shakti, Shiva manifests himself as Nara, a finite being. It is

Shakti which enables Nara to recognize himself as Shiva which is his real nature. In other words Nara is non-different from Shiva.

There are the three powers of the Absolute – Iccha Shakti (power of will), Jnana Shakti (power of knowledge) and Kriya Shakti (power of action).

Trika Darshan teaches us to realize that this whole objective world is not separate from God- consciousness. God is not somewhere else to realize. It is within oneself. In nutshell the essence of this philosophy is that God and individual is one. Somananda, the first exponent of Prtyabhijna has precisely said in Shivdrishiti:

Asmad rupa samavistah svatmanatmanivarane
sivah karotu nijaya namah saktya tadatmane (Verse-1)

(Let Shiva, who is myself, bow down to his real nature – to universal Shiva by his own Shakti for removing the bondage and limitation, which is Shiva.)

As such there is not the slightest difference between individual soul and Paramshiv and this world is nothing but the blissful energy of the all - pervading consciousness of Paramshiv.

Trika Darshan is the three-fold science of man and his world. This whole universe is manifestation of Paramshiva. It is simultaneously within the Absolute and outside the Absolute. It is Paramshiva's Svantantrya by which whole universe is created. Svantantrya is his Shakti and Shakti is this whole universe. And from which this universe comes out is Shiva. We can say this universe is the expansion of his energy. So Shiva and Shakti are interconnected with each other just like a word and its meaning or fire and its heat.

The universe manifests and contracts in the Absolute's consciousness simultaneously like blinking of eye where Unmesha is expansion and Nimesha is contraction.

Yasyonmeshanimeshabhyam Jagatah Pralayodayau.

{By whose Unmesha (opening of eyes) and Nimesha (closing of eyes) this whole universe is destroyed and created. By Unmesha this

universe is destroyed and by Nimesha the universe gets destroyed/rise.}

In Trika Darshan salvation is called Pratyabhijna or Samavesh-prapti. In salvation also there is trinity in the ways. They are Shambhav Upaya, Shakta Upaya and Anav Upaya. The fourth way which is no way called Anu Upaya. Devotion or Bhakti is also acknowledged as a means of self realization. Bhakti means supreme respect and adoration of Shiva. The devotion to Shiva should be such as would be free from any kind of attachment. There should be no scope of any other desire to emerge except love for Shiva. It is Bhakti or devotion which enables a person to perceive Shiva in everything.

The Trika is meant for all human beings, without any distinction of religion, sex, caste, colour, creed etc. Devotion for Paramshiv and desire for Samavesh or self-realization are the only main qualifications. Since Man is primal as well as final concern in the Trika it can also be called the "Science of Humanism".

VESH NATH JYOTSHI (BHAT) ---- A SHAVITE SCHOLAR

Upender Ambardar

A recall of the time and the days spent with Sh. Vesh Nath Jyotshi (Bhat) not only recaptures but also conjures up many happy memories of the delightful and appealing qualities of the head and the heart. He was born in the picturesque town of Bijbehara, district Anantnag on 17th of July 1937 in a family known for the religion-spiritual disposition and earthy wisdom. His father Sh. Nand Lal Jyotshi himself was a man of religious and spiritual temperament. He was fortunate enough to have served the renowned saints of his time. His physical and emotional bonding with the saintly persons had made his home replete with pious atmosphere and religious expression.

The conducive and meaningful atmosphere prevailing at home eventually contributed a lot in shaping the life of Jyotshi Sahib. The religious inclination and serving of the saints and the sages was a family tradition of Jyotshi Sahib. The daily prayers, mediation and engagement in the religious pursuits were a daily routine and a part of the family life. The devotional temperament ingrained in him right from the formative years not only helped to consolidate the sublimity of his thought but also goaded him latter on to embark on a path related to religious learning and spiritual endeavour. His thorough knowledge and proficiency of the Sanskrit language made him to acquire mastery over the Hindu religious texts and the Shavite scriptures. His inquisitiveness to learn more on the spiritual path made him to visit and converse with the ascetics and the saints whenever an opportunity and chance arose.

The most noteworthy and defining moment of his life was when Jyotishiji received the initiatory Guru mantra and the spiritual initiation from the renowned Saint of Kashmir Swami Mahdev Kak Ji Maharaj. His insatiable craving and appetite for knowing more about the religious scriptures and the Shaivite Texts drew him towords Swami Vidhyadhar Shaiv (Trika) Ashram located at Karan Nagar, Srinagar in the year 1952, when he was a collage student of FA

(Faculty of Arts). For the achievement of this lofty purpose, Sh. Vesh Nath Jyotshi was entrusted to the Pradhan of the said Ashram namely Dr. Srikant Raina a renowned Shaivite Scholar of Kashmiri by Swami Mahadevkak Ji Maharaj himself. The said Ashram was established by Dr. Srikant Raina in the year 1944. Apart from the foremost and celebrated Shaivite Centres known by the names of Swami Ram Shaiv (Trika) Ashram, located at Fateh Kadal, Srinagar and Ishwar Ashram, Ishber Srinagar, the Shaivite Ashram of Swami Vidhyedhar Located at Karan Nagar Srinagar was also a femed centre, where Shaivism related writings and texts were taught and propagated in the truest sense of the Guru-Shisha tradition. The religio-spiritual grooming received by Jyotshi Sahib at the said Ashram under the able guidance of Dr. Srikant Raina made him to sail towards the journey of self recognition and self realisation. It not only satiated his appetite with the religious learning but also enriched his consciousness. His spouse Smt. Jaikishori whole heartedly supported and supplemented him in this spiritual endeavour.

After completing his college education he joined the state government service, where he served in various capacities at various places of his postings. He worked as Assistant Accounts Officer at the Irrigation and Flood Control departments at Aventipora, and Anantnag town and also at PHE Division, Bijbehara. Subsequently he was transferred to Jammu division, where he worked at the health department, Civil Secretariat, Jammu Medical College, Command Area Development and Power Procurement department Jammu upto the year 1995. By dint of his hard and sincere work, he was elevated to the post of the Chief Accounts Officer, on which post he retired from the active State Service. Thorough knowledge and insight acquired by him resulted in the publication of the books titled "Divine Touch"and 'Trika Darshan- EK' 'Sunskshipt Auvlokan' written by Sh. Vesh Nath Jyotshi. His other translated and exposition related works include 'Mahimnah Stotram (Hymns to the Greatness of Shiva), 'Satroot Sengreh' and Pathie Sengreh etc. He also wrote Shaivism related articles, which were published in the daily news papers of the state and in the journal 'Malini' for which he was a

frequent contributor.

The ease with which he would participate in the Shaivism related discourses in the different seminars reflects eloquent testimony to his grip and mastery over the Shavism related texts and scriptures.

He was warm hearted person having an obliging poise and grace without any trace of egoistic sense. He also had a fabulous sense of genuine humour and would always speak straight from the heart. He also had a prodigious memory and could recall and recite the Shaivism related Sanskrit shalokas readily and effortlessly. His manner and method of teaching the sacred Shaivite texts was with a scholarly passion and in an explainable way supplemented with appropriate parable and analogies. He also functioned as General Secretary of Swami Vidhyadhar Swami Mahadev Shaiv Ashram, Paloura Jammu, where he also taught Shavite texts to the Ashram inmates on every Sunday. Imparting of the said knowledge and insight to the seekers at Swami Ram Shaiv (Trika) Ashram, Gole Gugral, Jammu on every Saturday and once a week at his residence at Talab Tiloo was also a part of his routine.

Sh. Vesh Nath Jyotshi (Bhat) had a steady, unwavering faith and immense devotion both for his deeksha Guru Swami Mahadevkak Ji Maharaj and his Vidya Guru Dr. Srikant Raina, whom he would quote with reverence off and on during the course of teaching of the Shaivite Scriptures. He departed from this mortal world on 26th of February 2013 to finally image with the Panch Mahabootas from which he had sprung. We hope and pray that the percepts and ideals for which he lived and stood remain alive in our hearts so that we grow beyond the physical plane into the higher levels of Consciousness.

V N JYOTSHI - PASSIONATE TEACHER, KEEN TRADITIONALIST

By Pradeep kaul

It will not be out of place to say with a degree of certainty that Pandit Vish Nath Jyotshi (Bhat) was an extraordinary person. May be the word extraordinary might sound to many, not associated with him a little bloated. But had they been conversant with this ordinary, humble person who appeared so in the exterior but was quite opposite within, they would have changed their opinion. That made him a cut above the rest, a face in the crowd, hence extraordinary. Otherwise, his humble origins from a sleepy, small town of Bijebehara in south Kashmir could have made him just like the majority of us, concerned primarily with earning a decent living through little exertions and scant strains and then cocoon their own homes, raise families and eventually pass away unnoticed, without doing anything tangible for the society. But Pandit Vish Nath ji was not made of that DNA. His roots perhaps lied in the historical grandeur of his sleepy town of Bijebehara which was once famous for its great monasteries and temples, the most famous being that of Vijeshvara. The modern name of Bijebehara is derived from this great temple complex which the iconoclasts and religious bigots led by Sultan Sikander in between 1390 and 1410 AC laid waste. In this town the famous courtesan Kankali did her amorous rounds and also innumerable women flower sellers by the great Vijeshvera temple created a vibrant scene so craftily and vividly described by Kshemendra in eleventh century. Not far away, the famous temple and pilgrimage centre of Chakradhara too for centuries had satiated the spiritual quest of many. Jyotshi ji was thus a historical inheritor of that legacy and within his limited means he out did what others, more endowed failed to accomplish. Here the point is of doing and not of wishing, which makes a difference and essentially that difference was destined to make him a popular teacher of Shaivistic lore.

Strangely, Kashmir Shaivism, the vintage philosophy that evolved in

Kashmir has been made to look a remote, rather a confused jumble of great mass of tangled treatises, complex in idiom, contorted in dialogue and convoluted in scope. The teachers who had mastered this pinnacle of flowering of absolute Indian monism were possibly disinclined to let the seeds of this great philosophy disseminate in various directions. our angst and anguish for the failure of our learned scholars to facilitate its teaching forces many of us to aver that they perhaps were not willing to let go their amorphous 'stranglehold' on it for reasons best known to them. May be I could be wrong in my inference but nonetheless it is the general perception among aspiring students who wish sincerely to study this immense philosophy. And unfortunately, this perception is shared by many scholars as well, especially about those teachers who lived in the latter part of last century.

Having said so, fortunately for laymen who had fire in their hearts to know after all what this 'Shaivism thing' meant, Lord Shiva had other plans. As they say strange are the ways of heaven, in that grand divine scheme, this great tradition was destined to be resurrected by a great saint and scholar Swami Ram Jee Maharaj of Fetehkadal, Srinagar who was born when the Dogra dynasty had set foot in Kashmir. The probable date of his birth is estimated to be around 1850 AD. By dint of his immense spiritual prowess, undiluted faith and vision Swami Ram Jee undertook upon himself the task of teaching this philosophy in a traditional way in his Ashram at Fetah Kadal, Srinagar from the last quarter of nineteenth century, could be around 1885 AD. His three disciples, Swami Mehtab Kak Ji, Swami Vidhya Dhar ji and Swami Govind koul ji in turn taught this Shashtra to a brilliant band of devotees cum students who have kept this glorious tradition alive despite great many difficulties of myriad nature. Teachers followed and disciples too grew but unfortunately the masses of Pandits remained by and large oblivious of this greatest of their heritage. Today, as our grand temples, books and arts of infinite beauty are lost to Islamic vandalism; it is the legacy of Kashmir Shaiva Darshana (philosophy) that sends out to the entire world the grandeur of the independence and ingenuity of the Kashmiri mind. In the present atmosphere of aloofness and general

apathy, the teaching of this grand philosophy continued but as said only on a subdued note. Hence, if any ordinary person captured and apprehended the colossal import of learning and transmuting this legacy, it definitely needed some singular effort and dedication.

While piecing together the efforts of people who helped Kashmir's Shaiva philosophy survive, we come across three kinds of people. First, those who were divinely ordained or in common parlance were scholar saints like Sri Ram jee Maharaj and his disciples. They are followed by those who hailed from scholar families or were scions of highly learned priests who had inherited Sanskrit learning since generations and lastly come those heroes, who without any robust home tradition evinced keen interest to learn the philosophy and also resolved to disseminate whatever they understood to others. These are real heroes, for they have a passion in their hearts to repair to their past heritage and understand the intricacies of Kashmir's greatest gift to mankind. Jyotshi ji, undoubtedly stands a hero in such circumstances for he not only took great pains to learn it from his Gurus but more eminently, made it a sacred mission of his life to teach it to men and women continuously for years and years.

It is all easy to say but it is far more difficult to do. Especially in the realms of learning and teaching philosophy, more so in such troublous times which due to many reasons are not conducive to such activities. It takes some measure of steely tenacity and reaffirmation of faith in our heritage that keeps men like Jyotshi ji in the reckoning. Such men will not go unsung but shall be remembered as long as the interest of man in Kashmir Shiva philosophy endures. Philosophy is a waning subject and those who want to understand it are shrinking because of variety of reasons. Debating such reasons could be perhaps beyond the scope of this discussion yet not so difficult to cognize. Pandits, as a community have suffered the defacement of their cultural symbols and religious persecution since middle of fourteenth century. This sordid saga is continuing in various forms even after independence. The present state of exile that started in 1990 has unleashed untold miseries on the community. Politically and economically, shorn of a decent hope of

redemption and languishing in a seemingly perpetual exile, there is a general lack of disinterest in Shaiva philosophy but we must hurriedly admit that despite all travails there are efforts to revive the teaching and understanding of Kashmir Shaivism. In such efforts, the historians while writing the history of the recent exile of Kashmiri Pandits will not forget the great efforts of community to preserve its heritage. And here again, emphatically they will not forget the remarkable contributions of men like Jyotshi ji. His place is thus secure in the recent cultural history of Pandits, as is his place in the Guru Shishya Parampara of Kashmir Shaiva Darshana lineage.

It is very difficult to place Jyotshi ji among the scholars of Kashmir Shaivism. His lineage and his avocation make it even more difficult, yet equally challenging. In fact he even did not like himself to be put in the class of scholars. He possibly could have definitely some cogent reasons in his mind. It could be humility or a sense of not being a scholar in the accepted genre. Perhaps it could also be due to his silent ascent to levels where such classifications do not matter, more particularly to a man steeped in honest quest to realize his self. Conceivably, it was all combined because at times he displayed worldly and unworldly attributes un-mistakenly. His scruples and strengths as well as errors made him an endearing human being who could be related to by men of flesh and bone. A sense of honesty about him regarding his traditional lack of Sanskrit grounding regarding its grammar and in depth philosophical polemics were writ large on his face and the greatness about him was that he never lost sight of his failings. His hard work, more than compensated for where he found himself wanting. What use it is to have a full thorough bred philosopher who does not reach out and share his knowledge. Similarly, it is no use to have a vast reservoir of fresh water, remote in location than to have a small spring which is accessible and able to quench the thirst of many a weary men. If Jyotshi ji was not a great Sanskrit scholar with a solid base in ontology, epistemology or teleology, yet he proved far effective by raising a band of students who have the potential of carrying forward the torch of Kashmir Shaivism to next generation.

It is a legacy of the tenacity of the Pandits of Kashmir that they have managed to save some vestiges of their hoary glory because of the fact that apart from hard, seasoned men of action like Jyotshi worked at the lower levels to appraise the aspirants about the basic intricacies of their cultural lore. To make basics clear and prior to that create an environment which attracted students though not in far greater number, shall still be deemed a contribution. Basics and interest inculcated, the ardent aspirant has wide scope to study the Shiavite philosophy with masters which are unfortunately not available at hand. Given the prevailing circumstances in which the Hindus of Kashmir find themselves, the scholars and teachers of this philosophy are very few and those who are available are too old and feeble to ferment an effective resurrection.

As said earlier Jyotshi ji was not a scholar in the classical or even in the accepted mode like having sought admission in a higher institute of learning or having publishes a thick volume of a research dissertation that would have won him a PhD. Or further published a series of internationally or nationally acclaimed articles and attended national or international conferences. He was not of that type even remotely. There was different streak in him which in the accepted parlance of knowledge hunting can be summarized as a passionate love for studying the philosophy within one's restricted means of understanding. He was not unlettered nor was he a complete novice to the modern ways. Despite his semi urban background which in his times, we talk of late early fifties of the last century were still semi dark ages for his small town, he earned his graduation in arts and landed in a good ,lucrative job from which he eventually retired as a senior accounts officer. That job and his sundry income from small orchards was still not enough to see him through his responsibilities, which were accumulated because of the sudden death of his brother, who had left behind a sizable brood of children mostly daughters of whom he took the responsibility of raising and marrying off decently. His children comprising two sons and three daughters were a natural duty which he singularly shouldered ably. His nature of facing the challenges of raising a huge family made him satisfied. And he would confide that in his worldly

duties he had done whatever was within his means. One's worldly ways to some extent reflect his inner sensibilities and Jyotshi ji, an affable, pleasing, smiling man of imposing and charming personality reflected a grace that caught ones eye.

His early grooming in the Shaivistic lore started with a fleeting memory of Swami Vidyadhar jee, the direct disciple of Swami Ram Jee Maharaj. Jyotshi ji's father was a devotee of Swami Vidyadhar jee and often times Jyotshi ji narrated his feeble and fleeting encounter with Swami Vidyadhar ji. His other devotee and disciple Swami Mahadev Kak of Ratnipora, Pulwama influenced him in his formative years. But it was Dr Srikant Raina of Srinagar who taught Jyotshi ji at Swami Vidyadhar Ashram, Karannagar which was established soon after the demise of Swami Vidyadhar jee in 1950. From here on begins the story of a man whom the reader now is acquainted with as Vish Nath Bhat Jyotshi. He studied many basic treatises of Kashmir Shiav Darshan under the feet of Dr Srikant Raina at the Karan Nagar Ashram for nearly three decades. It is not an easy task for a man to board a bus, often overloaded from Bijebehara to Srinagar, attend his official duties in the day and make it a point to reach the Karan Nagar Ashram late in the afternoon, study there and board the last scheduled bus to his home 45 kilometers away. This scheduled was repeated for nearly three decades. Making short and lengthy notes and wading through the highly structured Sanskrit treatises without proper grounding is not easy. Yet he was genuinely able to master some basic treatises of the Shaiva philosophy. His interest in learning devotional hymns having Shaivistic touch was enormous. He studied Para Praveshika, Pratibijna Hridayam, Para Trimshika, Shiva-sutras, Vijnan Bairav, Kularnav Tantra, Parmarthsaar, Samb Panchishika and Shivastrotavali, the great devotional work of Acharaya Utpaldeva in detail. He was able to comprehend the basic import of these important works of Kashmir Shaiva Darshana and satisfy the queries of those who came to him to learn them. Sometimes, he would not be able to satisfy people, more gifted and inquisitive but he would sift through books and references in order to quench their thirst.

Soon after exodus of Pandits from the valley due to the Islamic terror,

he undertook upon himself to teach a band of men and women, whatever he had understood and mastered during his long three decades of study. Soon Jyotshi Ji was seen attending Swami Vidyadhar Ashram established at Jammu and at Swami Ram Jee Ashram at Trilokpur near Gole Gujral. This routine continued unabated, only a few months before his death in February 2013. Meanwhile his wife who was a constant support to him and a great friend got bed ridden. Shattered by her condition Jyotshi Ji did not lose his tenacity and like a devoted husband tended his bed ridden wife in the best possible way. Even during those long years of her suffering he did not stop his routine of learning and teaching the Shaiva Shastra. Surprisingly being much sought for by his students and having earned a name in his own right he did not wear any air of command for being a teacher of Shaiva Shasana . But in his humble way he termed his classes as exchange of ideas. His actual words for his interactions with the people about Shaiva doctrines were called by him simply as Aaadan-Pradaan of ideas. His health after the death of his wife worsened, gradually inside he withered away yet in his exterior he never gave an impression that he was about to go.

One night after a brief illness, he flew away to meet his Masters. The bird has flown away. The song stopped so did his imposing figure with a charm vanish from our midst. But not before he incited inquiry in a group of men and women to delve deeper in the ocean of India's greatest philosophy. He published many booklets which are a great help to the beginner and also delivered many thought provoking speeches and presented papers, though in his heart he detested the delivering speeches. He was not a gifted orator who would hold his audience spell bound. He as a keen traditionalist derived pleasure to sit in an Ashram surrounded by interested people and reflect upon various aspects of Shaiva Siddhanta. Honestly, he was aware of his limitations but he was fired by a mission to ensure that whatever he had studied was passed on to the next generation. In this quest he has fairly succeeded. That is his enduring legacy. Today he is not with us but he has passed on an onerous responsibility to persons more learned and better endowed to pass on this exotic and timeless contribution of Kashmir to the next generation.

MY GURU (SHRI V. N. JOTISHI (BHAT)

Ashok Kumar Koul

अगाधसंशयाम्भोधिसमुत्तरणतारिणीम् ।
वन्दे विचित्रार्थपदां चित्रां तां गुरुभारतीम् ॥

Agadhasamsayambhodi –samuttaranatarinim/
Vande vicitrarthapadam citram tam gurubharatim//

I bow to that supreme and wonderful world of the master that gives rise to manifold ways of supreme thought that carry the disciple across the ocean of all doubts. (Spanda Karika 4.1)

The Guru is the person who puts before you the reality of God Consciousness. It is said that the Guru is the means who only can make you realise the fullness of these two awareness's, mudra and mantra. One way of explaining the function of the Guru is to say that he plants the seed of enlightenment in the disciple, which can be made to sprout and ripen through the tender care of the disciples daily spiritual discipline (Sadhana). This function is what the Trantras and Yoga scriptures call the grace of the teacher (Guru Kripa or Guru Prasada).

This guru kripa and guru prasada which I received from my Guru Maharaj [Shri V. N. Jotishi (Bhat)]. After a long time in spiritualism. I wander from one place to another place for finding the answer to my queries, I go to many Ashrams, Guru's and other spiritual philosophers. I started was studying scriptures of Kashmiri Shaivism where I find a Sanskrit word "Suah" which made me very eager to know meaning and the secret of this "Suah" word. I saw a sadhak discussing matrika with a person who was known to me, I approached to him and he give me the address of my destined emancipator Shri V.N. Jotishi (Bhat) who was teaching Kashmiri Shaivism. I reached Swami Vidhadhar Mahadev Kak Ashram at Palura. On seeing him in the Ashram Shri V. N. Jotishi, My Guru Maharaj directed me "Sit here your all queries (jagyasa) will remove". Bhat Sahab was teaching Shiv Sutras to the sadhaks who

were present in the Ashram. His nature was so sober and with high level of discipline. He started to advise me always with his blessings on me with his great affection.

When he taught Shivastotraavali of Acharya Uptaladev (ecstasy of bhakti ras of Traki Paramapara) he forget all about the surroundings and remained in ecstasy and his eyes showed divine (amrit) when he discussed the "I- ness " of this higher quality bhakti ras (we forget all and every which we have). He always stressed us to have faith in Shiv Sadhana rest you face what every come to you in this marga and follow according to our karmas and leave all up on Shiv Iccha. He was very eager to give me touch of all triak paraparm books which he (Guru Maharaj) started once again for my guidance. It was really his anughara on me when he started Parapavaishka (Entry in Supreme) for myself and this get me entry in the "Trika Parapara" family.

I cannot forget my Guru Maharaj who started a fresh class at his residence on Saturday Which give me a new director in my marga where I got Shant Chit (vishatie) with his bless and anughara. He taught me Parapavaishka, Pratyabhijna Hridayam , Kularnow tantra , Bhagwat Geeta , Shivastotraavali , Samba Panchaka, Bharoop Graba etc. It was my anughara that I get some time to discuss some secrets of "Trika Parampara" which give me a practical way for realisation of self. He was universally always linked with me and when we get very distorted by our duties he would always guide us at that time. All his service in trika marga was with nishkam Bhava. He was honest and never accepted anything from any person. He served Kashmir Pandits with his Nishkam Bhava in this present time. There is nobody who can teach Kashmiri Shaivism in this present scenario with authority.

Late Shri Bhushan Lal Ji was very senior sadhak of Trika Parampara and in this Ashram. He always used to say my forty years of experience in Trika parampara become successful by the divine teaching of Shri. V. N. Jotshi. The bhakti and surrender of late Sh. Bhushan Lal ji towards his teacher I always remember as his tears rolling down when I discuss with him. In Ashram so many senior have regards and respect for him.

I got limited time in the company of my Guru Maharaj Shri V.N. Jotishi (Bhat) to understand Trika Pparampara to which I was very eager. It was his blessing on me with his divine knowledge which made my chit clean and the seeds starts sprout. It was only due to his words that the Trika Philosophy can be understand only in 95 days as it was said in favour of Trika Param Guru Shri Acharya Ram jee Maharaj could (complete Trika Parampara in 95 days). I also get these 95 plus or minus days where I can read Sanskrit on this concept which he taught my Guru Maharaj Shri V. N. Joteshi (Bhat). It was all his confidence on knowledge and His dedication on this Trika parampara which led me towards the Prakash side of this coin. He has guided me to higher levels of understanding with his blessing and Anugraha.

GURUDEV: THE SUPREME BRAHMAN

By: Upender Ambardar

Kashmir Shaivism, known worldwide for its spiritual value, philosophic depth and sublimity of thought is a glorious and an inseparable fast of our civilization and existence. The monistic shavite tradition makes us to realize our existing identity with the ultimate merger in the universal consciousness, which is Lord Shiva himself. In the glory of this great thought, the manifested world is not an illusion but a reality and a man in the present state of conditional existence has forgotten that he is Shiva himself.

In the glory of this great thought; the manifested world is not an illusion but a reality and a man in the present state of conditional existence has forgotten that he is Shiva himself. In this very fulfilling and meaningful philosophical, context and expression, the "Guru-Shiksha"tradition occupies a distinguished and dignified status. This very tradition acknowledges the exalted position of the spiritual preceptor. It regards Guru as a motivator in the dream of the God realisation, with Guru's grace key to the concept of liberation or moksha. In a plainspeak, Gurudev is embodiment of the spiritual powers, which in turn fulfil the religious and spiritual needs of the seeker.

The spiritual preceptor guides and instructs his disciple on the path of the self recognition and the God Realization. This perfection guides as a sadhak towards the final goal of liberalization or moksha. There are many shlokas and stanzas in Sanskrit language addressed to the Guru, whre the Guru is highly acclaimed for his God like qualities. They are recited daily in the Shavite Ashrams. Some of the famous guru Oriented Shlokas are:

"Akhand mandalaa kaarum
Vyaaptem yaen charaa charum
Tatpadhum dharshitam yaen
Tasmai shri guurve namah"

(Salutations to that admirable Guru, who is divinely oriented and god like gifted and who has divulged and apprised me about the absolute

truth regarding the divinity which permeates both in the moveable and the static.

"Agyaan timirandhasya gyanaaaanjenshalaakaya
Chakshurunmeelitum yaen tusmae shrigurave namah"

(My salutations to the venerated Guru, who has opened my eyes and removed my ignorance by applying the divine collyrium to self knowledge to my eyes)

"Guru Brahma Guru Vishnu
Guru Devo Maheshvarah
Guru Reva Parum Brahum
Tasmi Shrii gurevae Namah"

(My salutations to the virtuous and lordly endowed Guru, who is brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwara himself and is also the intimate supreme reality of Param Brahma)

"Chinmayun Vyapkyutsurvam Trilokyum
Tutpadhun Dharshitum yaan tusmai
Shrigaurvae namah"

(My salutations to my Guru, who is bestowed with splendid, noble and lofty virtues and who has made it possible to realise the Supreme Reality which pervades in everything involving both the sentient and insentient in all the three worlds.)

Tvameva maaata cha pitaa tvameva
Tvameva bandhushsha sakhaa tvameva
Tvameva vidhyaa dravinum tvameva
Tvameva sarvah mae deva deva

(My Param Guru, you are everything for me. You are my mother and father, my brother and my friend. You alone are knowledge and substantive asset. You verily are thy god.)

Guru adiravadish cha Guru parum
Guruh parama daivatum
Guru paratarum haasti tasmai
Shri Gurvae namah

(Inspite of the Guru being the cause of the creation of the universe;

yet he is out of the creation. The Guru has the colossal standing and none in this world can equal his status and position. Hence my most respectful salutation at the holy feet of such a Guru.

Na Guror Adhikum Tasmai Tutwam
Na Guror Adhikum Tasmai Tapaha
Tatwa Gynaanaat param naasti
Tasmai shri Gurave Namah

(There is no primary truth than that of the Guru. There is no greater comprehensiveness than the Guru. No enlightenment and awareness is greater than contemplation. I offer my salutation to such a Guru.)

Likewise, "the Guru Geeta" meaning the song of the Guru is a verse text, forming an important component of the Skanda Purana. It has been authored by the sage Vedvyasa. It entails a conscientious discourse between Lord Shiva and his divine spouse the Goddess Parvati, who is inquistive and curious to know about the Gurus relevance and importqance in ones life. Lord Shiva is response to it acquaints as about the dexterous and charitable nature of the Gurus grace. Interestingly enough, rishi Vedvyasa, an incarnation of the Lord Vishnu is said to the first Guru of the world in the human form. Accordingly, the Jayanti dives of rishi Vedvyasa is celebrated as Vyas Purnima, also devotees. It is only Guru, who by imparting the sanctified initiatory mantra known by the name of the Guru Mantra makes a seeker to break the worldly bondage by realising oneness with the supreme god.

As such in the Shavite tradition of the Guru – Shiksha fiaremfiaza, guru is accorded the highest esteem, regards and respect. As seeker in return, must have absolute faith and unquestioned commitment for the Guru.

Mannatha shree jagannatqah mudgaru
Shree jagatguru
Mudaatmaa sarvabhootaatma
Tusmain shree gurave namah

(My maestro is the lord of the world. My guru is mentor of the world.

My soul is equal to the soul existing in everything on the earth. Such a self realized teacher is the guru of the entire universe. I offer my frustrations")

The worthy and revered gurus are categories as:

Guru – the immediate and individual designated though, parathpara guru – the guru, which is the origin of the spiritual wisdom and enlightment and lastly the paramestha guru – the guru who has the power to grant liberation or moksha to a seeker. Lord Shiva is said to be the parameshta guru as he is the highest guru and guru of the universe and guru dakshanmurti. The guru in the human form is believed brilliance and enlightenement. He by his grace and secret initiation in the form of guru mantra breathes spiritual energy in the devotees and soul, which in turn results in the realisation of the supreme reality.

The spiritually enlightened guru, also known as sadh guru not only infests religious knowledge but also bestows spiritual enlightenment to the seeker and the disciple.

Once Maharishi Raman was asked about the indispensability of the Guru, he with the assertion "does a small child need a mother". It aptly emphasizes and stresses the overarching importance and relevance of the Guru for a disciple or the sadhak. Even the jagat Guru Adi Shankra had the need to have a Guru.

According to the Puranas, guru is the param shiva himself in the human form. the religious scriptures also regard Lord Shiva and Lord Vishnu to be the first divine teachers.

A Shloka of the Gura Geeta beautifully puts forth the virtuous attributes of a gurubeing Chaitenyam, Shashwatham, Vyomeathectam, Shantam, Niranjanam, Nalabindu and Kalateetam.

(Om Namah Shivaye Gureva)

I salute param Shri Garideva, who is embodiment of the Sut – Chit – Ananda and source of self shining divine radiance and brilliance.

Tasmai Shree Guruve Namah.

"OM SH. SHIVAYA GURVEY NAMAH"
SH. VISH NATH JOTSHI (BHAT) THROUGH MY EYES

Arjun Dev

Sh. Vish Nath Jotshi was born at Bijbehara, Anantnag. His father Sh. Nand Lal Jotishi was a discipline of Swami Vidhyadhar Ji.

Swami Vidhya Dhar Ji Maharaj used to visit Ratnipora and stayed with Swami Mahadev Kak who was his disciple. After nirwan of Swami Vidhyadhar Ji, Swami Mahadev Kak, who was a Govt. employee retired from service in 1951. Swami Mahadev Kak often visited Bijhehara where amongst other disciples, Sh. Nand Lal Jotishi, Sh. Kanth Ram Tikoo were prominent among them. Thus a bond amongst disciples of Swami Vidhyadhar Ji was formed.

Sh. Vishav Nath Jotishi right from his childhood had developed interest in learning Bhagwat Geeta, Vedas and Shastras. For acquiring the knowledge of Vedas and Shastras he would travel from his home to Ratni Pora and would discuss the issues to clear any doubts on Shavism.

Meanwhile during this period "Guru Diksha" was also bestowed by Swami Mahadev Kak Ji to his disciple Sh. Vishav Nath Jotishi.

Sh. Jotishi was employed in J&K State and most of the time he was posted in and around Srinagar. During stay at Srinagar he attended Karan Nagar Ashram of Swami Vidhyadhar JI Maharaj where disciples of Swami Ji would deliberate various aspects of Trika Philosophy on every Sunday. Amongst the prominent disciples were Swami Sri Kanth Ji, Sh. Prem Nath Raina, Sh. Dwarka Nath Bhat, Sh. Amar Nath Bhat etc. By dint of devotion he achieved mastery in Shaivism.

After Nirwan of Swami Mahadev Kak in November, 1973 every effort was made to perform Jug at his Ashram at Ratni Pora. Sh. Vish Nath Jotishi would participate and ensure smooth performance and functioning of the Ashram. During mass exodus of Hindus from the Valley in 1990 devotees of Shed his Jug at my resident i.e Vivek Vihar, Paloura, Jammu. It was felt that land for construction of Ashram may

be purchased byt due to financial constraints the same was not possible at that time. Sh. Vish Nath Ji moved a proposal to amalgamate Ashram viz Swami Vidhyadhar Ji Ashram, Karan Nagar and Swami Mahadev Kak Ashram, Ratni Pora. Accordingly with the sincere efforts of Sh. Vish Nath Jotishi, combined Ashram viz., Sh. Swami Vidhyadhar, Sh. Swami Mahadev Shiv Ashram was constructed at Vivek Vihar, Paloura in 2000. Annual Jug of Swami Vidhyadhar Ji and Swami Mahadev Kak together with annual nirwan divas of Sri Kanth is also performed at said Ashrma. In addition to above 'Adhatmic' teachings and deliberations on every Sunday were made under the guidance of Sh. Vish Nath Jotishi at Paloura Ashram till his life time. He authored number of books on 'Shavism' for the benefit of the society and his disciples in particular.

(The author who belonged to Ratnipora is Patron of Sh. Swami Vidhyadhar, Sh. Swami Mahadev Shiv Ashram, Paloura.)

SHRI VESH NATH JOTSHI (BHAT) – A HUMBLE TRIBUTE

B. L. Challu

The intervening night of Feb, 26th and 27th, 2013 corresponding to Phalgun Krishan Pakhash Pratipada was unfortunate one for us the SHAIVITES (TRIKA) when an unassuming Scholar and dedicated teacher did not rise to see the sunrise. Sh. V.N. Bhat Jotshi was unwell for quite some time. His will to work towards propagation of the Shaiva (TRIKA) philosophy acquired through vigorous efforts at the feet of his Guru-Maharaj made him to defy the impediments caused due to failing health. I, probably, was the last to see him on this fateful night (around 8.30 p.m.). We exchanged, as usual, greetings and a couple of inquires about his health. He had grown weaker but his voice and speech did not falter. In order not to strain his energy I took his leave without an iota of doubt that it was our last meeting. The next morning telephonic message about his having shed his mortal frame barely two hours after my departure was indeed a shocking one.

Sh. Vish Nath Jotshi (Bhat) and I are from Kashmir Accounts Service of our State, and knew each other even before the forced Exodus of 1990 of Kashmiri Hindus from the valley. In the past quarter century, our meetings grew in frequency and in particular after his retirement from Government Service in early 1995. His interest in the propagation of Trika philosophy grew faster and he started devoting more time to this task although the health of his wife took a steep decline. After the demise of his wife Sh. Jotshi Ji devoted his full time and energy to this objective and with the aim of disseminating the knowledge acquired at the feet of his Vidhya Guru. Sh. Jotshiji's Vidhya Guru was revered Dr. Siri Kanth ji who was a Medical practitioner of repute in Srinagar. He himself was the senior most disciple of Swami Shri Vidhyadharji Maharaj who in turn was an illustrious and front ranking disciple of Swami Shri Ram ji Maharaj who revived Kashmir Shaivism (Trika Philosophy) which had suffered a setback at the hands of Muslim rulers of Kashmir. Sh. Vish Nath Jotshi (Bhat) was initiated by his spritual Guru Swami Mahadev Kak Ji of Rattanpur – a disciple of Sh. Swami Vidhadharji Maharaj. He was immensely influenced by the Guru-Parampara, a distinctive feature of Kashmir Shaivism which is the chief cause of the Philosophy's sustenance all through the centuries.

Sh. Vish Nath Jotshi (Bhat) hailed from Bijbehara of Anantnag District of Kashmir Valley, studied in Amar Singh College in Srinagar and as

the fate was, lived at Karan Nagar in the house of Pt. Dr. Sirikanth Sahib which was just adjacent to the Aashram of Swami Vidhyadharji at Karan Nagar. Doctor Sahib put all his head and soul in teaching of Shaivic Shastras and allied scriptures to his young followers. Sh. Jotshi ji's eyes would brighten with pride with the mention of his Vidhaya Guru's name and Sh. Jotshi ji would often quote his Guru Maharaja's examples to explain the intricacies of the philosophy to his students. Sh. Vish Nath Jotshi (Bhat) was usually posted at or around Bijbehara during his service period in Kashmir and would move to Karan Nagar Srinagar to attend the lessons at Aashram and move back at the fall of night to attend to his domestic and official work next morning.

After his retirement from Govt. Service he came into direct contact with Mahatma Shri Kashi Nath ji Koul – the Shaiv Aacharya loved disciple of Shri Swami Govind Koul Jalali who in turn was the loved Shishaya of Lord Shri Swami Ramji Maharaj, and who had established Shri Ram Shaiv (Trik) Aashram at Gole Gujral Jammu in 1993 on the plot of land donated him by the heavenly couple of Smt. and Sh. S.N. Pandita of Gole Gujral to propagate the Shaiva (Trika) Philosophy and carry forward the light, in consonance and line of the Aashram Parampara. He in association with Dr. T.K Zadoo published the Primer of Shaivism "Parapraveshi-ka" for Ashram which is "word to word" meaning in English and the commentary, that too in English, Mahatma ji and Shri Vish Nath Jotshi (Bhat) worked on Saamb - Panchashika" word to word meaning in Hindi with commentary in Hindi which could not be completed to the ailment of Sh. Mahatma ji which culminated in his demise.

It was on the insistence of Shri Mahatmajee, that he (Sh. Jotshi Ji) started holding of class on Saturday at Gole Gujral Aashram and later at Vivek Vihar, Paloura Aashram. He also conducted a class at his residence on Thursdays.

Shri Jotshiji's urge to serve both his Guru Maharaj and the seekers of Kashmir Shaivic Dharshan made him to author Shaivism related works and establish the Shri Swami Vidhaya Dhar, Swami Mahadev Kak Aashram at Vivek Vihar Paloura Jammu. It is praise worthy example of his spirit of service to his follow men and Guru Maharaj. He lived a simple but a disciplined life and wanted others to follow the same.

MAY LORD Shri Swami Ram Jee Maharaj grant him peace and tranquility. He is one of most missed friends of mine.

TRIBUTES

They say when you lose somebody whom you love tremendously; you lose a part of yourself. We didn't only lose our grandfather; we lost a scholar, philosopher, preacher, visionary, Mahatma and an epitome of Shaivism (Shiv Bhakti). He was passionate; about every rightful them. He had the audacity and boldness to put his expressions across the people with different mindset. We don't need to shed tears on his going, but we have to cherish his dedicated life and need to acknowledge his contribution towards our culture and Shaivism. Personally, his passing away is a big void in my life and I will make sure that you will be proud of me.

For everybody his/her Grandfather is great and I am no exception. When I say "GREAT", I really mean it. The Central thing is his greatness which is personified in his whole life. Many of us have still not come in terms with his death. It is during all this time I have realised, what an influential, praise worthy, captivating person he was. I won't hesitate in saying that he was a 'GOD' like figure to many people, who came all the way even from Srinagar, cried like a baby and bowed down in front of his photograph, asked for his forgiveness and blessings. In short he was a phenomenon, who is born in centuries. But for me he was my grandpa, whom I loved, had fun with and learned a lot. He shall be always in my Prayers.

Shishank Raj Bhat (Grandson)

He was like a huge chinar tree under whose shade we all got comfort both worldly and otherwise. Jija ji as we called him was one of the strong pillars in our relation achieved everything by dint of his intelligence and hard work. Post death of Masi he made a significant contribution as Shaiva Scholar. A great loss to our extended family and community, surely we will miss him, My hand folded regards to this great soul.

Anil Pandita (New Delhi)

Really a true philanthropist, a noted scholar and a proficient administrator a staunch Pracharak of Shiv philosophy and true dispel of Guru Maharaj, a

competent advisor (to govt) in financial matters and above all a supreme human being. This great personality was the one who wrought many fellows of varied creeds caste and religion in a single strand. Our salutations to the noble to soul. Keep your blessing showering to all us from Shiv Dham. God will rest your soul in eternal peace.

Sanjay Kumar Pandita (Toph Sherkhani Jammu)

We can't even attempt to fathom this great persona of immense knowledge and experience. We have the good fortune of being a part of this great family of which "Papa" was a dynamic figure. He was not only revered by all of his clan, but also by his disciples, his peers, his teachers and everyone else. I know that we all will always remember him affectionately and his best wishes will always be with us. I miss him profoundly.

Arun Jotshi (U.S.A.)

DEDICATED TO SH. VISH NATH JOTSHI (BHAT)

On the outset, I remember a person who came to our residence few times was known to me as a friend of my dear father. I know him as a colleague of my Dad who helped him during the retiring period and solved his few complicated problems.

I am the offshoot of this friendship between the two dynasties since 1982.

I used to correspond with him prior to my marriage and seeking his advice and his guidance once I asked him that what practically we mean by GOD. He made me understand that parents are the real GODs and a son should always search God in the lap of parents not in temples. He further advised that how the edifice is best by the parents just like the sparrow does for her little ones in their nests must be kept in the mind always.

A person born genius has never given in against any situation, he lost almost all elder male members in his young age but from his youth he shouldered all the responsibilities happily and courageously he settled his dependents with dignity and honour. He never thought that he was sacrificing his own youth and comports.

Rarely such personalities take birth in kaliyug. He had been a selfless social personality with vision and mission in his mind and with all qualities of giving sacrifices, fulfilling promises helping to needy and guiding to all.

The day I lost my own father, I was extremely disturbed and depressed but I saw my father living in the soul of Mr. Vish Nath Ji. Now after his Nirvaan I feel I have really become orphan in this world.

M. K. Bhat (Talab Tillo)

MY FATHER MY PRECEPTOR

He was to me a gentle, polite and intelligent person as if mother nature had made him specially so. He was a strict father, who always expected us to be disciplined (in both personal & professional lived) but at the same time he was a very loving and caring father. There was always a delicate sense of care, support and love which was always there in between us. I am not able to come in terms with the fact that he is not with us. It has created a huge void in our lives, but as they say; show must go on. Every effort has to be made by us to make him smile on us from Swarga his Param dham.

Khem Raj Bhat (son)

HOUSEHOLDER, FATHER AND SAINT

February 26th, 2013 was a fateful day when our revered father Sh. Vish Nath Jotshi (Bhat) left for heavenly aboard. This day shall always remain a fate full day for all of us. His journey to the realm of almighty has left us dazed. He was not only my father but a friend, guru and guide as well.

Right from my childhood, I saw my father, fondly called by children as "PAPA", as a very disciplined, dedicated and dominating person. He was a man of Principles throughout his life and stood for the righteous cause and never bowed to unscrupulous pressure.

I remember how nicely he was handling the burden of heavy responsibility which was on his shoulders. This great soul underwent great sorrows and hardships but he refused to give up and continued

to work for the welfare of family relations and friends. When I was growing up he taught me so much about worldly responsibilities and infused a sense of discipline and moral code of conduct. At the same time he tutored me not to lose the sight of Dharma and the transient nature of life.

He was a mentor not only to us but to relations and friends also. They would come off and on and take advice from him on important Issues. As he had a reputation of being a great visionary and decision maker, his Muslim friends and associates would came to him and take advantage of his advice. Until his death, he was a very caring father who monitored his children regardless of their age. Even his relations and friends testified to his quality of caring not only for his children but for everyone else. He was a very affectionate father who has been and will always remain a beacon lights for us, guiding us through the treacherous passage of life. We feel privileged and blessed him as our father.

Papa never wasted a bit of minute during his life time. As he was a highly religious person, he engaged himself in the routine prayers and Ashram activities, offering spiritual guidance to the devotees. He was imparting teaching to the devotees at his residence and also at Shri Swami Vidhadhar Ashram at Paloura. He also taught Shavite scriptures and kept at Shri Ram Shiv Trika Ashram, Gole Gujral, and Jammu. He offered his services to Ashram and devotees in spite of his failing health till his last breath His contribution is so immense to the cause of preaching "Shaivism" he will be remembered for ever.

He was a great role model of source of Inspiration for all of us. We will dearly miss him on all the occasion. He will be with us not in person but in spirit, we will try to continue to carry forward his legacy.

Yog Raj (Son)

MY GRANDFATHER - BEST IN THE WORLD

Yes, I have seen God, not only seen but I've lived, learnt and played with him. It is very rightly said that you don't value things when you have them but you come to know about their true worth when you lose them.

My grandfather, Shri V. N. Jotshi (Bhat) was a person who had the hunger of learning. He was a man who had an answer for every question and solution of every problem. He showed all of us the way to the right path of the life, never wanted us to be sad and gave all of us hard boost. In my life he come like a wind and went like a storm.

The time I've spent with him is special and precious to me and is best for me. He is, was and will be my best friend. Whenever I made mistakes, he rectified them and showed the right way. But what I'll always regret is that I couldn't tell him that how much I loved him. He is my hero and my real life idol.

He always talked like a friend with me and my siblings and made all of us laugh a little louder than anyone else could. He used to create a joyful mood and cheerful atmosphere, where ever he went.

Talking about his knowledge, whenever I asked him anything, he always answered me and that too appropriately. He was always eager to know about new things and used to be up-to-date in his information His hunger of learning never ended. He wanted all of us to be like him, but, "Gems are many and diamonds are few".

He always used to tell me that, be the one among them, avoid clashes and fights but regret fully could not take all lessons from him. He was an ocean of knowledge. He taught me how to find a word from the dictionary. He had dictionary not only in English, but in Hindi, and Sanskrit. He had a lot of books in his room and used to read them.

I find myself so lucky that, before his death I was able to spend a whole day with him in his room. I still remember that day I gave my board exams of class 10th, he brought me a shaving trimmer that very day and I still have it with me and I still use it. I'll preserve it and keep it with me as it is the last and the only thing that I have of him. I think that his knowledge about Shaivism was a lot. He was well versed .... Shavite knowledge. He was best in this and really unrivalled.

At last I would say, thank you that you came in our lives and gave us knowledge about rights and wrongs. We are so thankful to you that you gave all of us the divine touch. I'm sorry for my mistakes. So, sorry for them , and I always need your blessing I always say that I'm Best in

the world but after recapitulating your memories you are truly Best In The World.

Grandson, Shubham Bhat

A TRIBUTE TO MY LOVING GRANDFATHER V.N. JOTSHI (BHAT)

I lost my Grandfather on 26th February 2013. It's going to be hard to get over the death of the most important person on the earth for me and for my family that's for sure.

I will miss everything about him, his voice, and his presence in the house, his cheerful laughter and his loud blooming voice. Only God knows for sure how much I am going to miss this very important person in my life.

I will never forget him and I will always love him forever, May his soul rest in peace. I am very proud and happy to have my Grandfather in my life that I lovingly called as "Papa". He was my idol. He was simply a genius. He was a remarkable person.

As a Grandfather he loved caring and helpful and he was like a torch in my life. Whenever I faced any problem or whenever I had any difficulties in my studies, I always used to go to Papa to solve that problem and he always helped me. He was a very big support for me. And he was very much fond of songs; he was very kind hearted and an emotional person. He fulfilled all of our demands. He never refused any of our genuine demand. His passing away is a very big loss for us. I still can't believe that such a legend is not now with us but his love, his blessings and his teachings will always remain with us in our hearts.

He had all the qualities of a generous person. He was very intelligent; he was very hard working, efficient and very much easy phase of life up-to-date in. I really want to be just like him. I know that I can't be a genius like him. But I will try to apply his all the teachings. My Grandfather was a great personality and I am proud of him and I wish a day will come when he will be proud of us.

Today, when he is not with me, I relalised his real value, that how much my grandfather meant to for me. At last, I only can say that such a great person is not physically with us, but his presence will always remain alive in our hearts and in our memories "Love U Papa"

Priya Bhat, (Grand daughter)

SADDA SHIVA SAMIYO KARU MEON CHAARAI

Yi Brahman Zanam Maa Maelam Dubaarai (o, Shiva, take care of me as the oportunity of being a Brahman will not be bestowed upon me again and again)

Kashmir has enlightened the world for being the source of Shaivism, Kashmir Shaivism has attracted the attention of the world scholars. The valley has been giving birth to great Shiva scholars in continuity. In fact Kashmir is the spring of Shaivism which quenches the thirst of those who practice to taste the richness of 'Self-Consciousness'.

I being the resident of Ratanpur, has the privilege, to be one of the members who aspire to achieve the knowledge which the past scholars have left with us. History unfolds that Ratanpur has the deep roots of Shaivism. There is the mention of Ratanapura in Kalhana's 'Rajatarngini' (Ref 2402, 2433).

Pt. Visha Nath Ji the enlightened soul, was the discipline of Swami Mahadev Kak of Ratanpur.

Being descendent of Swami Mahadev Kak, spiritually elevated soul and a doyen Shiva Scholar, I am lucky enough to feel the scholarly and spiritual touches of Pt. Visha Nath Ji. He was a source of inspiration to many people but for me he was a guide, a teacher, and an advisor. Pt. Visha Nath Ji was a lighthouse which showed the ways to remove the ignorance of darkness. Man is always in the process of making and I hope, the blessings of Pt. Visha Nath Ji will prove to widen my vision. His contribution to the field of Kashmir Shaivism is immense and will continue to show us the light.

My Handful Pranam to the great soul.

G. L. Koul (Biloo Ji) Ratnipora

मनसा स्मरामि ....

डॉ० जयकृष्ण शर्मा

"कौन कहता है मौत आएगी तो मैं मर जाऊँगा
मैं तो दरिया हूँ , समन्दर में उतर जाऊँगा"

जिसे यह बोध हो कि शिव के उन्मेष और निमेष से इस दृश्य जगत् की उत्पति और संहार होता है उसके लिए जीव का देह-त्याग एक सामान्य एवं स्वाभाविक घटना है। परन्तु इस संसार में दैनिक जीवन को निभाते हुए कुछ घटनाएं तथा अनुभव मन-मस्तिष्क पर अमिट छाप छोड़ जाते हैं जो यदा-कदा किसी प्रसंगवश चलचित्र की भांति प्रत्यक्ष अवभसित होते हैं। दिवंगत आत्मीय की स्मृतियां तो रह-रह कर नयनों को आर्द्र बना देती हैं। ऐसी स्थिति से उभर पाना बहुत समय तक असंभव होता है।

ज्योतिषी विश्वनाथ भट्ट बालावस्था से मेरे परिचित थे। जब-जब मैं अपनी बुआ जी स्वगएंया कमलावती (विश्वनाथ जी की चाची) के पास बिजबिहाड़ा जाया करता था तो भट्ट साहब को अपने कक्ष में हर बार अध्ययन–रत पाता था। संभवतः उस समय वे स्नातक नहीं थे। वे मुझे अपने कक्ष में बड़े स्नेहपूर्वक बुलाते। पढ़ाई के बारे में पूछते, अंग्रेजी श्ब्दों के स्पेलिंग या फिर गणित के प्रश्न पूछते। फिर पास में पड़ी कोई पत्रिका थमा देते। मुझे आज भी वे रंग–बिरंगे चित्रों से भरे "इलस्ट्रेटिड़ वीकली" के पन्ने याद हैं जिन की ओर मैं आकर्षित होता था, विशेषकर 'कार्टून' और 'कामिर्क वाले पन्ने। इन पन्नों को बार-बार उलट-पलट कर देखता, चुपके से काट कर चुरा लेना चाहता पर कागज़ फाड़ने की कड़कड़ाहट से उनके सतर्क होने पर मेरा दुष्प्रयास कमजोर पड़ता, कभी भी अवसर न मिल पाता। दरअसल मैं इन विचित्र आकृतियों वाले पन्नों को घर में अपने पिताश्री को दिखना चाहता ताकि वे उन पर कई प्रकार की कहानियां गढ़ कर हमें सुनाते और उस के बाद अपनी पाठ्यपुस्तकों पर कवर चड़ाकर सहपाठियों को रिझ़ाता। मेरी बालचेष्ठा को वे भांप लेते। मेरी लालसा पूरी करने के लिए वे शर्त रखते...बदले में अपनी कांगडी दो... टोपी दे दो...फेरन दो...आदि। इन शर्तों को पूरा न कर पाने की स्थिति में मेरे मुख पर आए हताशा के भाव देख कर बड़े स्नेह से पूरी पत्रिका ही लेने को

कहते। पत्रिका पा कर मेरी प्रसन्नता की कोई सीमा ही नहीं रहती।

कश्मीर के अनन्तनाग ज़िले का एक कस्बा बिजबिहाड़ा श्रीनगर-खन्नाबल मार्ग पर है। यहीं पण्डित ननहकाक के घर सन् १९३७ ईस्वी में श्रावण शुक्लपक्ष द्वितीया (१७जुलाई १९३७) के दिन श्रीमती धनवती के पहले पुत्र-रत्न का जन्म हुआ। नाम रखा गया विश्वनाथ। इन के जन्म के विषय की रोचक घटना पर मुझे 'रामचरितमानस' के 'बालकाण्ड' का यह प्रसंग याद आता है

एक बार भूपति मनमाहीं ।
भई ग्लानि मेरे सुत नाहीं ।
गुरु गृह गए तुरत महिपाला ।
चरण लागि करि विनय विशाला ।।

जिस प्रकार राजा दशरथ पुत्र-कामना हेतु अपने गुरु महर्षि वसिष्ठ के पास गए थे उसी प्रकार विजयेश्वर (बिजबिहाड़ा) निवासी स्वर्गीय ननहकाक भट्ट अपने मित्र स्वर्गीय श्री कंठ तिक्कू (शाह) के साथ एक दिन पुत्रेच्छा लिए अपने गुरु तत्कालीन संत तथा शैवदर्शन के मर्मज्ञ राजानक विद्याधर जी के पास श्रीनगर स्थित आश्रम पहुंचे। स्वामी जी उस समय भगवती पराशक्ति की पूजा-अर्चना में लीन कुछ स्तुतिपरक वाक्य उच्चरित कर रहे थे...मोक्षं भोगं ददाति या प्रभुदिता विद्याधरै वंदिता, सा मां पातु सरस्वती भगवती श्री राजराजेश्वरी। स्वामी जी के चरणों में ये दोनों श्रद्धापूर्वक अभी नतमस्तक ही थे कि वर-मुद्रा में अपने दोनों करकमलों को उठाते हुए स्वामी जी बोल पड़े... आयु में जो बड़ा है पहले उसे फिर छोटे को! स्वामी जी के ये शब्द वरदायक थे। कुछ समय के पश्चात् स्वर्गीय ननहकाक के यहां विश्वनाथ और उसके बाद स्वर्गीय श्रीकंठ तिक्कू के यहां भास्कर नाथ ने पुत्र रूप में जन्म लिया। विचारणीय है कि विश्वनाथ और भासकर नाथ पचहत्तर वर्ष की आयु में, जन्म के अन्तराल के अनुसार ही एक के बाद दूसरा, सन् २०१३ ईसवी में, पञ्चतत्त्व में विलीन हुए। इस बात का उल्लेख ज्योतिषी जी की बहन जी श्रीमती मोहिनी देवी (मेरी सासू माँ) ने मुझ से कई बार किया है। यहाँ यह बात बताना मैं आवश्यक समझता हूँ कि मोहिनी जी ज्योतिषी जी की अन्तरंग मित्र भी थीं जिन के साथ वे विचार-विमर्श करके निजी समस्याओं का निधान

तथा गृहस्थ–पालन के मामलों पर चर्चा करके अन्तिम निर्णय लेते थे। वे उन्हें अपनी राज़दार मानते थे। अपने भाई के निधन पर वे द्रवित हो न केवल नैहर अपितु गुरु प्रदत्त प्रसाद से वंचित होने के विलाप भी करती थीं। ज्योतिषी जी को वह 'भाईसाहब' कह कर सम्बोधित करती थीं। श्रीमती मोहिनी जी का यह भी कहना है कि भाईसाहब और उनके अनुजों का यज्ञोपवीत संस्कार कुलगुरु ज्योतिषी आफताब राम शर्मा (विजयेश्वर पंचांग के प्रवर्तक) के सान्निध्य में स्वामी जी के द्वारा हुआ था। उनके अनुसार जब स्वामी जी ..."यज्ञोपवीतं परमं पवित्रं प्रजापर्तेयत् सहजं पुरस्तात् आयुष्यं अग्रयं प्रतिमुञ्च शुभ्रं यज्ञोपवीतं बलमस्तु तेजः" ... मन्त्र द्वारा भगवती गायत्री का आवाहन करते हुए यज्ञोपवीत भाईसाहब के कंठ में डाल रहे थे तो स्वामी जी के नेत्रों से भावावेश में अजस्र अश्रुधारा बहने लगी थी।

इन बातों से ऐसा प्रतीत होता है कि तत्कालीन संतों-महात्माओं की अनुकम्पा विश्वनाथ पर माँ की कोख से ही आरम्भ हुई थी। घर में संतों-महात्माओं की आवाजाही के कारण बचपन से ही उनकी रुचि कश्मीर के शैव साहित्य के प्रति बढ़ने लगी थी। उन्हें स्वामी विद्याधर, स्वामी महादेव काक तथा सागाम (कुकरनाग) के ज्योतिषी निरञजन नाथ शास्त्री जी जैसे महापुरुषों एवं पण्डितों का मार्गदर्शन प्राप्त हुआ। स्वामी विद्याधर जी के सर्वाधिक प्रिय शिष्य डॉ० सूर्य कण्ठ जी का साहचर्य भी उनको प्राप्त था। स्तोत्र संग्रह (पृष्ट ३९) में डॉ० सूर्य कण्ठ के प्रति उनके ये सम्मान-जनक उद्गार चिरकाल तक याद रहेंगे।

पुरा पुरारे पद धूलि धूसरः
अनन्त सिद्धान्त पथान्त गामिनः
समस्त शास्त्रार्णव पार दृश्वनः
विद्याधरस्य प्रियं सूर्यकण्ठं नमामि ।।

ज्योतिषी विश्वनाथ भट्ट अपने गुरुजनों का अत्याधिक आदर–सत्कार करते थे। उनके पांच मंज़िला घर में स्वामी विद्याधर जी और स्वामी महादेव काक जी के पीठस्थान कश्मीर से विस्थापन के समय तक भवन की तीसरी मंज़िल के एक बड़े से कमरे में विद्यमान थे जिन की नित्य प्रातः एवं सायंकाल साफ-सफाई के बाद आरती उतारी जाती थी। जम्मू नगरीय कोलाहल से दूर

त्रिलोकपुर तथा पलौडा के सुरम्य एवं शांत स्थानों पर अपने श्रद्धेय गुरुओं स्वामी राम जी , स्वामी विद्याधर जी तथा स्वामी महादेव काक की स्मृति में उन्होंने आश्रमों के निर्माण में भी अपनी ओर से श्लाघ्नीय भूमिका निभाई। कश्मीर शैव दर्शन और उसके आचार्यों के प्रति उनका भावातिरेक इस बात से भी आंका जा सकता है कि राजानक क्षेमराज तथा योगराज जैसे शैवाचार्यों के नाम पर ही अपने दोनों आत्मजों का उन्होंने नामकरण किया।

कश्मीर शैव दर्शन के गूढ़ रहस्यों को जानने के लिए वे सदा व्यग्र रहते थे। उनके लिए स्वामी विद्याधर आदि महान आचार्यों का पथप्रदर्शन शैवदर्शन के तत्वों को जानने तथा समझने के लिए काफी लाभप्रद रहा। दार्शनिक रहस्य या अध्यात्म संबंधी जिस किसी सिद्धांत का उन्हें बोध होता उसे लोकोपकार हेतु दूसरों के साथ साझा करने को तत्पर रहते थे। स्तोत्र संग्रह (गुरु-स्तुति), त्रिकदर्शन-एक संक्षिप्त अवलोकन, डिवाइन टच, श्रीपुष्पदन्त रचित शिवमहिम्नः स्तोत्र का अंग्रेज़ी अनुवाद आदि पुस्तिकाओं का प्रकाशन उनके बोध तथा अन्तर्मन में उपजे उनके विचार पुंज को प्रकट करने का माध्यम बना। इस सिलसिले में न मालूम उन्होंने मुझ में ऐसा क्या देख लिया था कि प्रकाशन से पहले प्रायः प्रत्येक रचना की पाण्डुलिपि मुझे दिखाते थे और अपनी ओर से 'दो शब्द' लिखने को कहते। उनका यह अवदान परिवर्तित हुई मानसिकता वाले भ्रमित समाज में आध्यात्मिक संवेदना का संचार करेगी-ऐसी आशा की जा सकती है।

श्री विश्वनाथ जी शैव साहित्य के साथ-साथ महायोगिनी ललद्यद, रुॅवप भवानी, रॅच़द्यद स्वच्छ क्रॉल, आहद ज़रगर, अहमद बटवॅर्य, परमानन्द, कृष्ण जू राज़दान जैसे कश्मीरी भाषा के रहस्यवादी कवयित्रियों-कवियों के काव्यों में आध्यात्मिक तृप्ति को तलाशते रहते थे। इस तलाश में वे बिजबिहाड़ा के एक छोटे से पठार पर स्थित "जया देवी" के प्रांगन में भी महीनों परिवार सहित निवास करते थे। यहां पर न केवल उनकी चिन्तन-शक्ति विकास पाती थी बल्कि मानसिक शान्ति का लाभ भी उन्हें प्राप्त होता था। विस्थापन काल में भी जयादेवी तथा थजीवारा (बिजबिहाड़ा) में बूड़ा अमरनाथ के दर्शनार्थ येन केन प्रकारेन कश्मीर पहुँच ही जाते थे।

ज्योतिषी विश्वनाथ भट्ट हीरे-मोती के अन्तर और खरे-खोटे की पहचान में

पारखी नज़र रखते थे। भट्ट साहब एक ऐसे व्यक्ति का नाम था जो बड़े स्वाभिमानी एवं अनुशासन प्रिय थे। वे न कभी झुके और न कभी टूटे। सरकारी मापदण्ड वाले 'हम दो और हमारे दों के एकल परिवार की संकुचित मानसिकता वाले समाज में रहते हुए भी संयुक्त परिवार के संचालन तथा प्रबन्धन में वे सिद्धहस्त थे। कुशाग्र बुद्धि एवं कर्मठ थे। जम्मू-कश्मीर राज्य के विभिन्न विभागों में लेखाकार से लेकर मुख्य लेखाधिकारी तथा वित्तीय सलाहकार के रूप में कार्यरत रहते हुए प्रतिष्ठित अधिकारियों में गिने जाने लगे। सेवानिवृत्त होने के पश्चात् उनका एक नया व्यक्तित्व "मुमुक्षू" के रूप में उभरा। उन्हें 'अर्थं से 'परमार्थं की ओर अधिक समय देने का अवसर मिला। इस में उन्होंने कितनी सफलता अर्जित की, कह नहीं सकते परन्तु एक उच्च भावी जीवन के लिए प्रेरणा अवश्य पाई होगी। इनकी धर्मपत्नी स्वर्गीया जयकीश्वरी, जिन्हें वे अर्धाङ्गिनी कहना अधिक उचित समझते थे, के देहावसान पर जब मैं अपनी संवेदना तथा सांत्वना प्रकट कर रहा था तो उन्हों ने मुझ से कहा- शिव से 'ई की मात्रा का लोप होने पर 'शव' ही शेष रह जाता है। इस कथन में कितना गूढ़ तथ्य निहित है कोई रहस्यवादी ही समझ सकता है। विधुर होने के बाद शरीर से अस्वस्थ रहते हुए भी उनका अधिकांश समय अध्ययन, मनन और ध्यान में व्यतीत होता था। वे प्रातःकालीन शंखनाद थे जो हमें जागरूक बना कर सदा के लिए चुप हुए।

स्वर्गीय ज्योतिषी विश्वनाथ भट्ट जैसी पुण्यात्मा के प्रति मैं अपने अन्तस्तल से श्रद्धा सुमन अर्पित करते हुए परमशिव से प्राथएं हूँ कि उन्हें शिव-सायुज्य प्राप्त हो। अस्तु!

मेरे गुरु — श्री विश्वनाथ ज्योतिषी

मोहिनी धर

शिव रूपी सूर्य की किरणों से जिनका हृदय रूपी कमल विकसित हुआ है ऐसे शिव भक्त मेरे गुरु श्री विश्वनाथ ज्योतिषी को मेरा शत् शत् नमन। आज के युग में दर्शन शास्त्र के प्रति लोगों का उदासीन बर्ताव देखने को मिलता है, जानने-समझने की बात तो दूर रही। ऐसे ही त्रिक् दर्शन के बारे में भी कहा जा सकता है। कश्मीरी पण्डित समुदाय को इस दर्शन के प्रति जो लगाव होना चाहिए था वैसा देखने को नहीं मिलता। इस साधना पद्धति के प्रति अभिरुचि दिन प्रतिदिन घटती जा रही है। कश्मीर की इस अनन्य धरोहर को अगली पीढ़ी तक पहुँचाने का प्रयास जिन संवेदनशील व्यक्तियों ने किया है उनमें श्री विश्वनाथ ज्योतिषी का नाम भी शामिल है।

श्री राम शैव (त्रिक्) आश्रम में ज्योतिषी जी से मेरा परिचय पहली बार हुआ। इस आश्रम में डॉ□श्रीकण्ठ जी की देख-रेख में शैव शास्त्रों का पठन-पाठन और उन पर चर्चा हुआ करती थी। चूँकि ज्योतिषी जी बहुत पहले से डॉ□ श्री कण्ठ जी तथा स्वामी विद्याधर जी आदि की छत्रछाया में त्रिक् शास्त्र का अध्ययन कर चुके थे और उन्होंने काफी ज्ञान भी अर्जित किया था अतः एक दिन श्री ज्योतिषी जी से मैंने यह प्रार्थना की कि रविवासरीय गोष्ठी के अतिरिक्त भी अपने घर पर वे हमें समय दें और त्रिक् शास्त्र के विषय में अधिक विस्तार से समझायें। हमारी प्रार्थना को उन्होंने सहर्ष स्वीकार किया। तत्पश्चात् हम प्रत्येक सप्ताह उनके घर पर जाकर शास्त्र अध्ययन करते रहे। यह सिलसिला पाँच वर्ष तक चलता रहा। उनके सान्निध्य में हमने 'शिवसूत्र', श्री क्षेमराजकृत टीका सहित 'साम्बपञ्चाशिका', अभिनवगुप्तऔत टीका सहित 'भगवद्गीता' विशेषकर 'आत्म-संयम योग' नामक छटा अध्याय, 'परमार्थसार' आादि का अध्ययन किया। उन्होंने हमें इन ग्रन्थों में निहित गूढ़ रहस्यों को बड़े सुन्दर तथा सरलतम शैली में समझाया। वे हमें अध्ययन के साथ-साथ साधना पर भी ध्यान देने का आग्रह करते थे। शैव साधना पद्धति को दैनिक जीवन में अपनाने पर बल देते थे। वे कहते थे कि ध्यान-साधना में मन लगाने का भरसक प्रयत्न करना चाहिए इसके लिए अवसर मत ढूँढ़ो अपितु

अवसर निकालो।

ज्योतिषी जी स्वयं भी यथा-अवसर साधना में लगे रहते थे। इस बात का आभास हमें तब मिला जब एक दिन उनके घर के बाहर हम बहुत समय तक दरवाज़ा खुलने की प्रतीक्षा करते रहे। दरवाज़ा खुल जाने के बाद जिस मुखाकृति को हमने देखा उससे तो यह सहज ही अनुमान लगाया जा सकता था कि वे किसी अलौकिक क्रिया में लीन रहें होंगे। वे बड़े अनुशासनप्रिय तथा नियमबद्ध व्यक्ति थे। जिस समय आने के लिए कहते उसमें किसी प्रकार का स्खलन उन्हें स्वीकार नहीं होता था। विलम्ब से आने पर डाँट भी देते थे। परन्तु इस में भी उनकी विनम्रता तथा स्नेह झलकता था। उनके वचन गम्भीर परन्तु हृदय बडा कोमल था। रुग्नावस्था में भी गृहस्थधर्म को निभाते थे। अपनी अस्वस्थ धर्मपत्नी की सेवा बड़ी सहिष्णुता से करते हुए हमारा मार्गदर्शन भी करते रहे। यह हमारा दुर्भाग्य था कि उनका देहावसान हुआ और हम एक प्रेरक, साधक तथा मार्गदर्शक से वंचित हुए। परमशिव उन्हें समावेश की स्थिति प्रदान करे।

गुरु बिन गति नाहि

उपेन्द्र अम्बारदार

धार्मिक प्रवृति के हर एक व्यक्ति में ईश्वर से एकाकार होने की लालसा होती है। इसे जीवन का सर्वोच्च लक्ष्य माना जाता है। दैनिक एवं नियमित गृहस्थ जीवन मूल्यों में श्रेष्ठता और सम्पूर्णता लाने के लिए गुरु की आवश्यकता अनिवार्य है। गुरु के बिना किसी भी साधना में सफलता प्राप्त करना एक प्रकार से असंभव है। भारतीय आध्यात्मिक परम्परा में अन्धकार से प्रकाश की ओर एवं आध्यात्मिक स्तर पर पूर्णता लाने के लिए गुरु ही शिष्य को साधना पथ पर प्रेरित करता है। गुरु ही साधक को अपने पूर्णत्व का बोध कराकर उसे परमात्मा के साथ एकाकार करवाने में सक्षम है। गुरु ही भौतिक समस्याओं का निवारण कर परमात्मा में एकाकार होने की लालसा को प्रशस्त करता है। जिस से गुरु अपने शिष्य के पशुभाव को मिटाकर शिवभाव उत्पन्न करता है। गुरु के औपापूर्ण दृष्टिपात से शिष्य के भौतिक और आध्यात्मिक स्तरों पर आत्मोन्नति होती है। गुरु के अनुग्रह के कारण जीवन में परिवर्तन आता है। विश्वगुरु रूपी भगवान शिव ही समस्त संसार के सिद्ध गुरु और परमार्थमार्ग के दर्शक हैं। यही कारण है कि मनुष्य रूप में गुरु को सर्वोच्च स्थान दिया जाता है। उसे साक्षात् ब्रह्मा,विष्णु एवं महेश्वर माना जाता है। तभी तो कहा गया है

गुरु ब्रह्मा गुरु विष्णुः गुरुदेवो महेश्वरः।
गुरु एव परंब्रह्म तस्मै श्री गुरुवे नमः।।

गुरु की अपार महिमा का वर्णन करते हुए यह भी कहा गया है कि शिष्य गुरु के प्रति पूर्ण रूप से समर्पित होना चाहिए। तभी गुरु शिष्य की जीवनशैली में निखार ला सकता है और उसके जीवन में आध्यात्मिक उन्नति ला सकता है।

गुरु पिता गुरुर्माता गुरुदेवो गुरुगति।
शिव रुष्टे गुरुत्राता गुरु रुष्टे नकश्चन।।

अर्थात् गुरु ही शिष्य के माता-पिता, इष्टदेव एवं मोक्षायक हैं। शिव के रुष्ट होने पर हमें गुरु ही बचा सकते हैं। परन्तु जब गुरु ही रूठ जाए तो कोई बचा नहीं सकता।सद्गुरु में ही ऐसी शक्ति है जो हमारे जीवन में अज्ञान रूपी अन्धकार को दूर कर सकता है। इसीलिए कहा गया है कि गुरु के बिना ज्ञान

की प्राप्ति संभव नहीं।

ज्ञानशक्ति समारूढं तत्वमाला विभूषितम्।
भुक्ति मुक्ति प्रदातारं तस्मै श्री गुरुवे नमः।।

गुरु अपने शिष्य को विधिवत् रूप से दीक्षा देकर उसके दिशाहीन जीवन को न केवल उचित दिशा देता है अपितु अपनी सूक्ष्म दृष्टि से उसकी देखरेख भी करता है। सद्गुरु शिष्य को निरन्तर आध्यात्मिक क्षेत्र में आगे बढ़ने की प्रेरणा देता है। भरतीय जीवनशैली और दर्शन में प्राचीनकाल से ही गुरु-शिष्य परम्परा रही है। एक गुरु अपने शिष्य को उत्तम संस्कार देता है और आध्यात्मिक ज्ञान द्वारा मुक्ति मार्ग पर चलना सिखाता है जिससे वह ईश्वरोन्मुख हो जाता है। यदि हम भारत के अतीत पर नजर डालें तो पता चलता है कि मर्यादा पुरषोत्तम राम ने महर्षि विश्वामित्र तथा ब्रह्मर्षि वसिष्ठ का शिष्यत्व ग्रहण किया था और श्री औष्ण ने ऋषि संदीपनी को अपने गुरु के रूप में प्राप्त किया। इन उदाहरणें से गुरु-महिमा का परिचय मिलता है।गुरु में ईश्वर की शक्ति का समावेश है जिसके बल पर एक गुरु अपने शिष्य को इहलौकिक तथा पारलौकिक सुख प्रदान करता है।

सद्गुरु की प्राप्ति सौभाग्य सूचक है।सच्चा गुरु मिल जाने का सौभागय बहुत कम लोगों को होता है। भारत के श्रेष्ठ संतों में स्वामी रामऔष्ण परमहंस का नाम उल्लेखनीय है। उनके परमशिष्य स्वामी विवेकानन्द गुरुभक्ति के अनुपम उदाहरण हैं। गुरु की महिमा के विषय में क्या खूब कहा गया है

गुरु गोविन्द दोउ खड़े काके लागो पाय।
बलिहारी गुरु आपने गोविन्द दियो बताय।।

गुरु ही शिव है शिव ही गुरु है। 'गुरुं शब्द केवल अक्षर समूह मात्र नहीं है अपितु मन को एकाग्र करने का एक साधन है जिस से अलौकिक आनन्द की अनुभूति होती है। यही कारण है कि गुरु- वन्दना को प्रत्येक धार्मिक विचारधारा में प्रधानता के साथ महत्त्व दिया गया है। गुरु के रूप में ज्यातिषी विश्वनाथ भट्ट को पाकर मैंने भी त्रिक् दर्शन के रहस्यों को समझने का सुअवसार प्राप्त किया था और उन्हीं की अनुकम्पा से अध्यात्ममार्ग पर आगे बढ़ने की प्रेरणा पाई। ऐसे प्रेरक को मेरी ओर से शत-शत नमन।

मेरे दादू

श्रिया भट्ट

अकसर मेरी सहेलियाँ अपने बुज़ुर्गों यानि दादा-दादी, नाना-नानी आदि के किस्से- कहानियाँ सुनाया करती थीं लेकिन तब तक मुझे मालूम न था कि बच्चों के जीवन में दादा-दादी या नाना-नानी का कितना महत्त्व होता है। यह मुझे तब पता चला जब मेरे दादा जी ज्योतिषी विश्वनाथ भट्ट हमें छोड़ कर इस संसार से चले गए। हम उन्हें 'पापा डियर' के नाम से पुकारते थे। घर के वरिष्ठ सदस्य होने के नाते बच्चों की ओर उनका अधिक ध्यान होना स्वाभाविक ही था। वे बड़े स्नेह और दुलार से हमारे साथ हंसी-मज़ाक करते थे । इस मज़ाक के दौरान हम जब अपनी मर्यादा अनजाने में लांघ जाते थे या जब कभी हमसे कोई शरारत या गलती हो जाती थी तो फटकार भी देते थे परन्तु, इस फटकार में हमारे लिए एक सीख भी छुपी होती थी जिसे हम उस समय समझ नहीं पाते थे। जब हम उस फटकार जनित खीज से उभर कर सामान्य होते थे तो हम अपने किए पर शर्मसार होकर पछताते थे। कभी-कभी वे हमारे साथ बच्चों के जैसा व्यवहार करते थे। वे जब कहीं जाने को तैयार होते थे तो हम से पूछते---मैं कैसा लग रहा हूँ ? लग रहा हूँ ना तीस साल का जवान ? जेंटलमैन जैसा? उनकी इन बातों पर हम मुस्करा कर कह उठते------आपके कहने ही क्या? आप तो सब से अच्छे हैं।

पापा डियर हमें हर समय खुश रखने के लिए कोई न कोई नया तरीका निकालते रहते थे। वे कुछ अजीब शब्द जैसे 'मुंगलाडी फटक', 'शीनमूरीडटक', 'शींगे सूंगे फूंगे', 'लूडीलाल' आदि गढ़ते थे जो न किसी शब्दकोश में मिलते और न कोई अर्थ रखते। न मालूम निरर्थक होने के बावजूद ऐसे शब्द हमें कर्णप्रिय क्यों लगते थे, सुनने के बाद खूब हंसी आती थी। ऐसे शब्द सुनने को अब हमारा बचपन तरस रहा है।

वे हमारी इच्छाओं को भी पूरा करते थे लेकिन पहले इन्कार करते थे। जब हम भावुक हो जाते थे तो हमारी आँखों में छलकते दो आँसू देखकर पसीज उठते थे और तुरन्त हमारी फरमाइश पूरी करने को तत्पर होते थे।

वे आधुनिकता के पक्षधर थे परन्तु अपनी सभ्यता तथा संस्कृति के त्याग या बलि पर नहीं। मनोरंजन के लिए वे या तो वे कश्मीरी संगीत या साठ-सत्तर दशक के श्याम-श्वेत गाने सुनते थे। उन्हें 'दो पल रुका ख्वाबों का कारवाँ ' तथा 'तू प्यार का सागर है, तेरी इक बूँद के प्यासे हम '--ये दो गाने बहुत

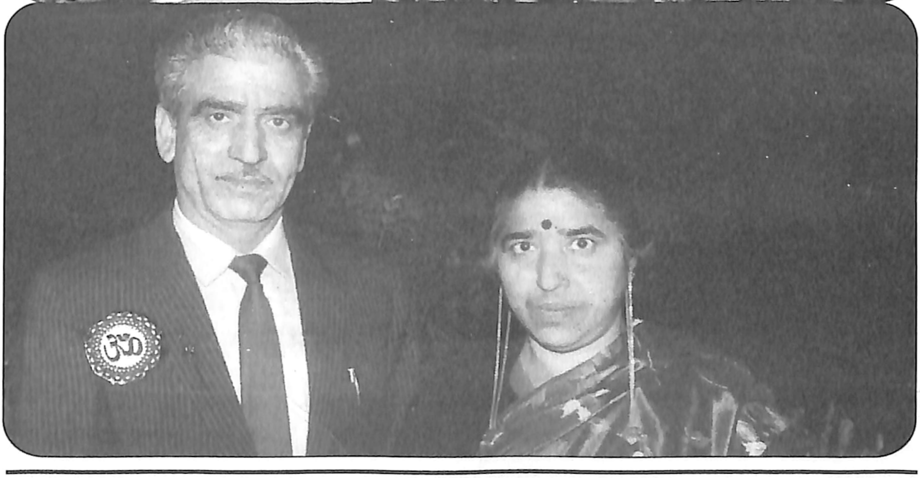
पसन्द थे। इन दो गानों को वे मेरी आवाज़ में सुनना पसन्द करते थे।

हमारी दादी जी के स्वर्ग सिधारने के बाद दादू जी शारीरिक रूप से अस्वस्थ रहने लगे थे। वे अपने को अधूरा सा महसूस करते थे। उनके उदास मन को बहलाने के लिए हम अकसर उनके कमरे में जा कर गपशप मारते थे। कभी-कभी वे स्वयं हमें अपने कमरे में बुलाते थे। किसी समय हमारे न आने पर कहते थे---जब मैं चला जाऊँगा तब तुम्हें मेरी कदर और ज़रुरत महसूस होगी। ऐसी भावुक बातों को हम नज़रअंदाज़ करते थे। उन से कहते---यदि आप हमें यही बातें सुनाने के लिए बुलाते हैं तो हम जा रहे हैं। अब जबकि वे हमको छोड़कर चले गए हैं उनकी बातें रह-रह कर याद आती हैं और मन बेचैन हो जाता है। हमें यह भी एहसास हो रहा है कि वे हमारे जीवन में क्या मायने रखते थे।

हमारे दादू जी में अनुशासन, संयम और सहनशीलतता का अद्‌भुत संगम था। दादू जी हमें अच्छे संसकार देकर एक अच्छा इन्सान बनाना चाहते थे। वे हमारी पढ़ाई में खूब रुचि लेते थे।वे प्रायः कहते थे---'पढ़ोगे लिखोगे बनोगे नवाब, नहीं तो हो जाओगे खराब'। पढ़ाई में आई किसी भी समस्या या मुश्किल को हल करने के लिए हम तुरन्त उनके पास जाते थे और हमारी मुश्किल आसान हो जाती थी। वे हमें बताते थे कि जीवन में कुछ बनने के लिए बहुत संघर्ष करना पड़ता है। हमारी यह कोशिश है कि हम अच्छे इन्सान बनें ताकि परलोक में भी हमारे पापा डियर अपनी पोती पर इतना गर्व करें जितना दादू जी पर हम गर्व करते थे। उनकी स्मृति में कुछ पंक्तियाँ मैंने लयबद्ध की हैं जिन्हें यहाँ पर दादू जी के प्रति श्रद्धांजलि के रूप में प्रस्तुत करती हूँ ः----

देखने में तो पापा केवल एक बुज़ुर्ग इन्सान थे
पर असल में वे एक व्यक्ति गुणवान थे।
देखने में दादू एक आम इन्सान थे
असल में वे मेरे भगवान् थे।
कहते हैं वे एक ज्ञानी इन्सान थे
असल में वे हमारी पहचान थे।
रिश्ते में वे हम सब के पिता थे
असल में वे हमारे सम्मान थे।
कहने को तो वे एक विद्वान थे
असल में वे मेरे अभिमान थे।
ऐसे इन्सान को करती 'श्रिया' प्रणाम है
'पपा डियर' की पोती का यह फरमान है।

PHOTO GALLERY



BIRTH CENTENARY CELEBRATION OF
His Holiness Sri Ishwar Swaroop Swami
INTERNATIONAL
KASHMIR

अपने कलम से

~~[illegible]~~ Trika Philosophy

~~[illegible]~~ Brief historical background.

Long before Christian era various philosophical doctrines reached Kashmir from outside its boundaries, and caught the imagination of Kashmirian thinkers. In due course of time Reshis and Munis gave full attention to their original Shaive Cult in the light of new ideas and theories.

26 TUE

By the end of 8th Century AD Shaivism in Kashmir had got established not only as a State Religion but of masses also.

After the decay of Buddhism in Kashmir it was sage Vasu Gupta who forged new values to Kashmiri Shevism.

As related by Acharya Bhatta Kallata and wanton who made an Shiv Sutra Vimarshan.

गौरी स्तुतिः

5 FRI

लीलारब्ध-स्थापित-लुप्ताखिल लोकां
लोकातीतैर् योगिभिर् अंतर् हृदि मृग्याम्।
बालादित्य-श्रेणि समान-द्युति पुंजां
गौरी अम्बां अंबुरुहाक्षीम् अहं ईडे ॥१॥

पदार्थ

6 SAT

लीला = लीला से
आरब्धां = उत्पन्न किया है
स्थापित = रक्षा की है — योगिभिः = योगियों से
लुप्त = ~~[illegible]~~ लय किया है — अंतर हृदि = हृद के अन्दर
अखिल = सब — मृग्याम् = ढूंढी जाती है
लोकां = लोकों को — बाल+आदित्य = बालसूर्य (प्रभात के सूर्य)
लोका-अतीतैः = लोकोत्तर (विश्वोत्तर) — श्रेणि = समूह के समान (in row)

Sunday

[illegible] (materialistic) [illegible]

[illegible] पुरि[illegible] [illegible]

[illegible] अहंभाव [illegible]

[illegible] अघोर[illegible] [illegible]

[illegible]

~~[illegible]~~ आस्तिकता [illegible] आस्तिकता

[illegible]

[signature] 5/12

PRESS GALLERY

Noted Shaiva scholar V N Jotshi passes away

JAMMU: One of the most profound scholars and preachers of Kashmir Shaivism Vish Nath jotshi(Bhat) passed away on Tuesday peacefully. He was seventy five. Born at Bijebehara in District Anantnag he had attained incredible mastery over many aspects of Kashmir Shaivism. He had learned in detail the philosophical and esoteric subtleties of the profound philosophy of absolute monism of Kashmir Shaiva philosophy at the feet of such learned masters like Dr. Srikanth Raina. In his childhood he had received personal grace from the renowned saint scholar Swami Vidhadhar ji Maharaj. After attaining a degree in arts he joined the Accounts Department where by dint of his hard work he retired as chief financial advisor in Health Department.

Jotshi Ji will be remembered for regularily conducting classes and seminars on Kashmir Shaivism where he imparted teaching of the Shaiva philosophy to many students and aspirants. To enable the young scholars in understanding the philosophy of Kashmir Shaivism he wrote number of books in easy language. His articles on the different aspects of Shaiva philosophy have been published in reputed journals of the country.

A hidden yogi he was down to earth and represented one of the last surviving Guru- Shishya traditions of thousands contd on page 2

Noted Shaiva Scholar V.N Jotshi passes away

Shadow Correspondent
JAMMU FEB 27:

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Noted Shaiva scholar VN Jotshi passes away

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Feb 27: Noted scholar and preacher of Kashmir, Shaivism Vish Nath Jotshi (Bhat) passed away on Tuesday. He is survived by two sons and two daughters.

Born at Bijebehara in District Anantnag he had attained incredible mastery over many aspects of Kashmir Shaivism. He had learned in detail the philosophical and esoteric subtleties of the philosophy of absolute monism of Kashmir Shaiva philosophy at the feet of such learned masters like Dr Srikanth Koul.

In his childhood he had received personal grace from the renowned saint scholar Swami Vidhadhar Ji Maharaj.

His death which is a big loss to the religo-cultural mosaic has been widely mourned by scholars, intellectuals and eminent people from the State. His cremation was attended by thousands of people drawn from all walks of life.

Noted Shaiva scholar V.N Jotshi passes away

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: One of the most profound scholars and preachers of Kashmir Shaivism Vish Nath jotshi (Bhat) passed away on Tuesday. Born at Bijebehara in District Anantnag, he had attained incredible mastery over many aspects of Kashmir Shaivism. He had learned in detail the philosophical and esoteric subtleties of the profound philosophy of absolute monism of Kashmir Shaiva philosophy at the feet of such learned masters like Dr. Srikanth Raina. In his childhood he had received personal grace from the renowned saint scholar Swami Vidhadhar ji Maharaj. After attaining a degree in arts he joined the Accounts Department where by dint of his hard work he retired as chief financial officer in Health Department.

m where he imparted

Jotshi will be remembered for regularly conducting classes and seminars on Kashmir Shaivism where he imparted teaching of the Shaiva philosophy to many students and aspirants. To enable the young scholars in understanding the philosophy of Kashmir Shaivism he wrote number of books in easy language. His articles on the different aspects of Shaiva philosophy have been published in reputed journals of the country.'

A hidden yogi he was down to earth and represented one of the last surviving Guru-Shishya traditions of thousands of years' old Shaivite philosophy. His death which is a big loss to the religo-cultural mosaic has been widely mourned by scholars, intellectuals and eminent people from the State. His cremation was attended by thousands of people drawn from all walks of life. He is survived by two sons and two daughters.

CONDOLENCE

A General body meeting was held today on 28th February 2013 at Swami Vidyadhar, Swami Mahadev Shair Ashram to condole the sad demise of **Sh. Vesh Nath Jotshi** (Secretary) of the Ashram. He was an ardent scholar of Trika Philosophy. He was the beacom light of Kashmiri Shivism, who would always try to propgate it to its hilt so as to bring it again to its pristine glory. Members from outside State has also conveyed their condolences through phones during meeting.

Five minutes silence was also observed for the peace of noble soul and Shanti Path was also recited in his memory. Sympathy was also conveyed to the bereaved family to bear this tragic loss. This is not the loss only for the Ashram but for the whole community.

Sh. Vish Nath Jotshi

Patron & President
Arjun Nath Ji
P.N. Raina

CONDOLENCE

A meeting of the residents of Tehsil Bijbehara was held to mourn sad and untimely demise of **Sh. Vesh Nath Jotshi (Bhat)** former President of Devasthan Prabhandak Committee Teh. Bijbehara. His contribution to revival of Devasthan Prabandhak Committee Bijbehara will always be remembered. He was acclaimed as the champion of Kashmir Shaivism who dedicated his precious years in teaching this philosophy. He was authority on Kashmir Shaivism. His demise is a great loss to the rich traditions of "Viiyeshwar Khestitra" of Kashmir. Two minutes silence was observed in his honour and the participants prayed to lord Shiva to great eternal peace to the departed soul and courage to the members of the bereaved family to bear this irreparable loss.

Sh. Vesh Nath Jotshi (Bhat)

Publicity Secretary
Devasthan Prabandhak Committee Bijbehara

श्री स्वामी विद्याधर जी

श्री स्वामी महादेव काक जी

श्री स्वामी डा. सूर्य कण्ठ जी

श्री वी. एन. ज्योतिषी (भट्ट)

Trilokpur Ashram

Paloura Ashram

printerangad@gmail.com #0191-2574004, 94191-86289